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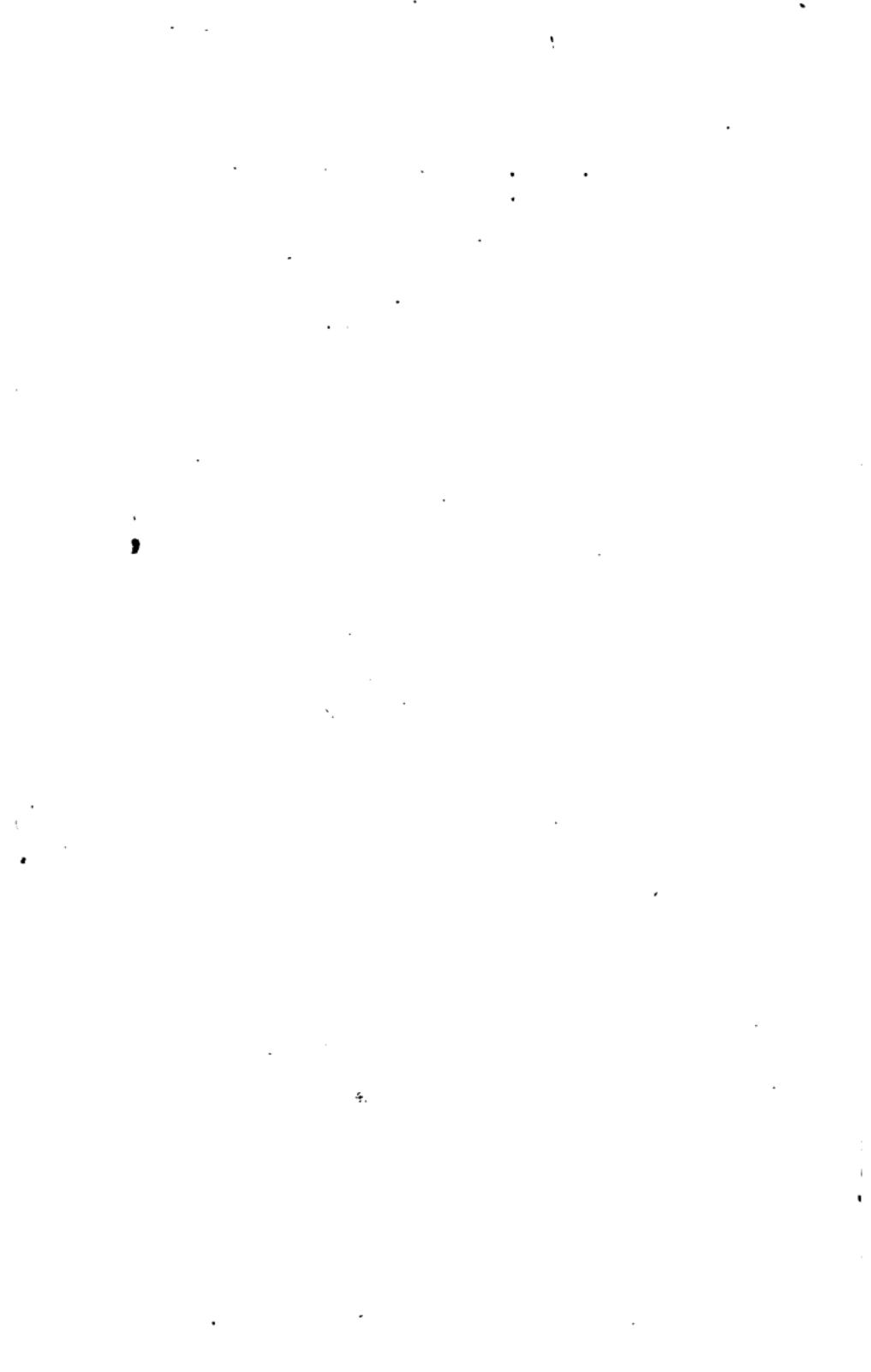
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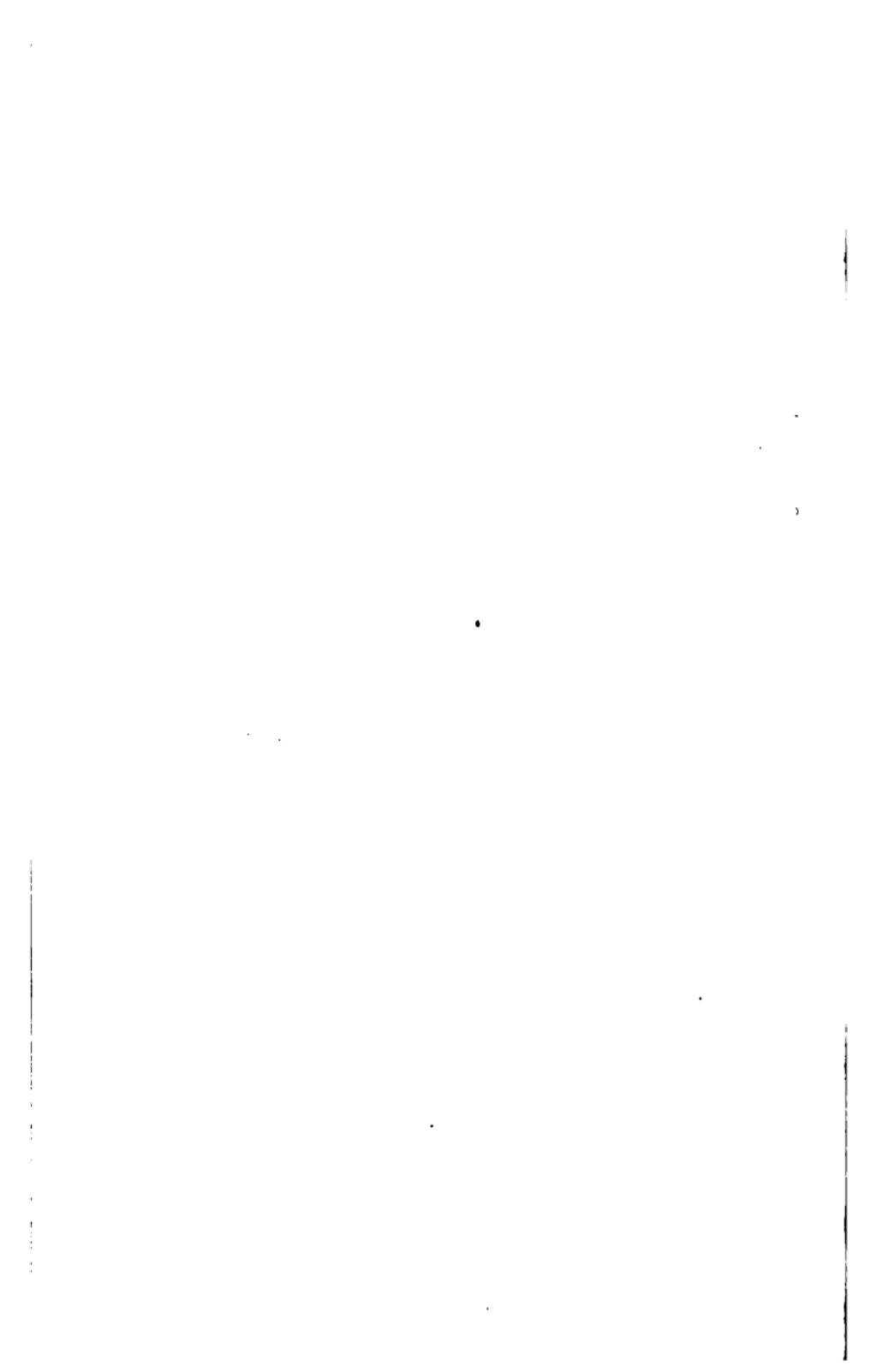


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Through the
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Love, Lore & Laughter of Old Ireland



by Seumas MacManus
(Mac)

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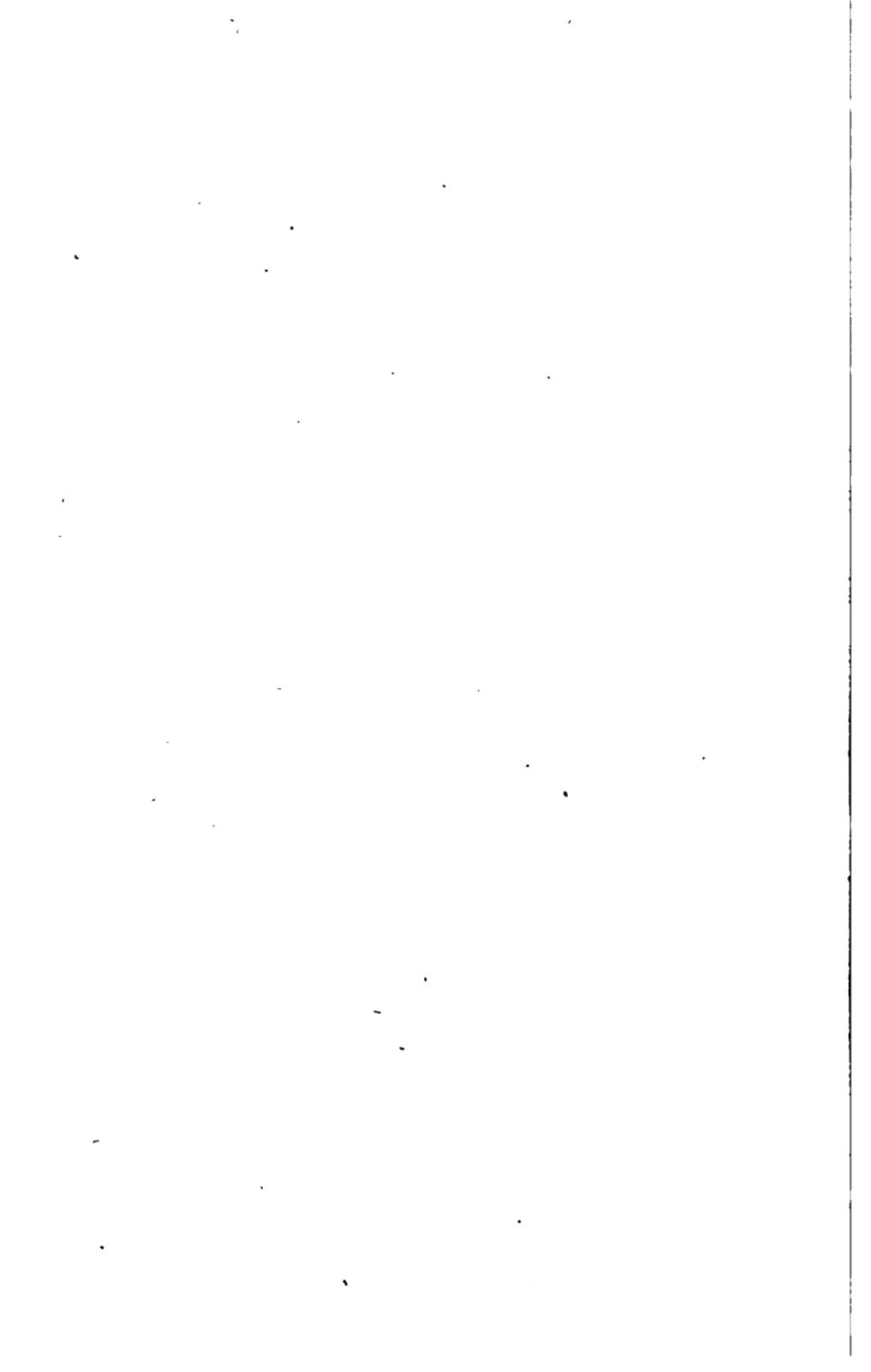
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Through the Turf Smoke



Through the Turf Smoke

Love, Lore, and Laughter of Old Ireland

BY

SEUMAS MAC MANUS
(“MAC”)

AUTHOR OF “THE HUMOURS OF DONEGAL,”
“THE LEADIN’ ROAD TO DONEGAL,” ETC.

LONDON
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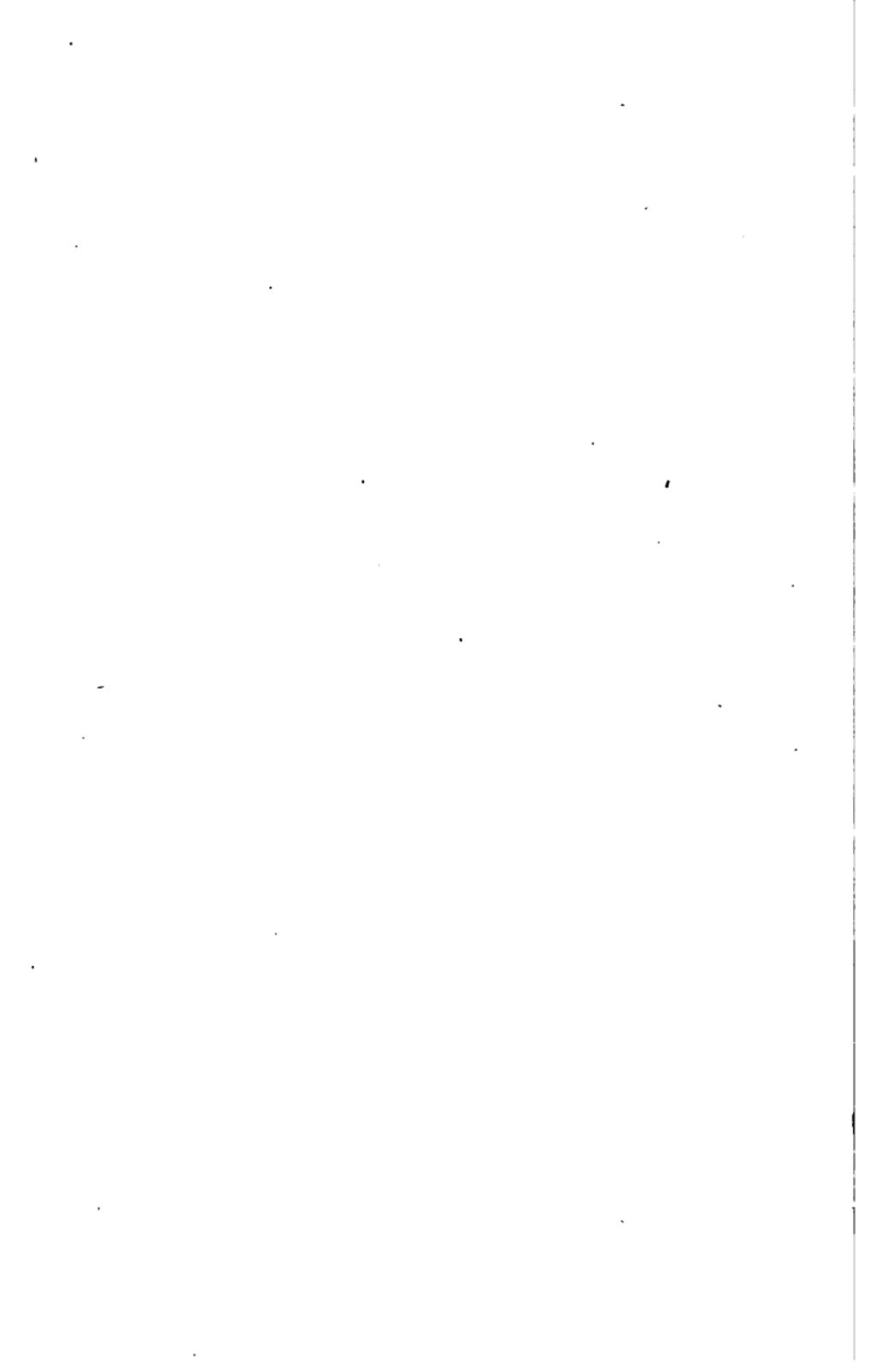
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TO MY READERS

TRAGEDY and pathos *go leor* there are in our lives, toilsome struggle and patient suffering ; but when we gather around the turf fire—old and young, boys and girls—care slips like a cloak from our shoulders ; the oldest is for the hour a child, gaiety crowds the cabin, and merriment fills all hearts. The wand of wit is laid upon us : the joke, the banter, and the merry story, pass ; and the folk-tale, old as the babble of our streams, and still as fresh and sweet, is listened to by ears that hearken for the hundredth time as fondly as they did for the first. Alike grey old pows and yellow little curly locks shake in sympathy for the sorrows of the hero, and wag with delight for his devilment and drollery. The same hearts that rang out a little peal of childish laughter beneath a smoke-blacked Irish roof-tree have afterwards, on red fields, often raised a *rann* that fluttered the folds of the defiant and triumphant Stripes and Stars.

In my remote and mountain-barred Donegal, the people, for a niggard living, strive with a surly sea and wrestle with a stubborn soil ; they are poor as paupers, and hospitable as millionaires. But the wit, the imagination, the poetry, the virtues, the soul, of the most miserable amongst them the wealth of Crœsus couldn't purchase.

Civilisation (with its good and its ill) has not yet quite felt itself at home amongst us ; books are few ; so there the shanachy, the teller of tales and the singer of songs, still gathers—in his old-time glory ; on long winter nights the world comes and seats itself, spell-bound, at his feet. From early childhood I, with my little tribute of admiration, sat by his feet. The glory of him dazzled me, and I dreamt of one day faring forth and conquering worlds for myself.

—I was a child, I said, and dreamt dreams.

SEUMAS MAC MANUS.

Through the Turf Smoke

THE BEWITCHED FIDDLE

FAIX, it's a good long wheen of years since it happened now. It was ould Jimmy Higgerty, that was uncle to Mickey acrass there, reharsed the passage to me. An' it was ould Jimmy himself, more betoken, that was the cause of the whole affair —for Jimmy, ye know, was what we call a canny man, very knowin' intirely, an' up to all sorts of saicrets that you nor me nor one belongin' to us, thanks be to Providence, knows nothin' at all, at all about. Jimmy was right-han' man with the fairies ; an' if ye'd believe all the stories ye hear goin' he come through some quare things, too, in his day—used to be out, they say, as reg'lar as the sun set, an' away ridin' aist and waist with the good people, an' gettin' insight into their ways of workin' ; an' sure it's meself that rec'lects

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if there was only a bit of a year-oul' calve sick from one end of the barony to the other, it was nothin' but post-haste for Jimmy Higgerty to cure it—an', sure enough, when Jimmy put the charm on it, it either lived or died afther ; there was no middle coarse.

Well, howsomiver, in Jimmy's day there was in Doorin' a one Solomon Casshidy ; an' the same Solomon in his young days was a thrifle wild—the fact is (to kill the hare at a blow), Solomon was the completest rascal iver run on two feet, an' was a parable for the counthry. Christenin', weddin', wake, funeral, patthern, fair, or market niver wint off complete without Solomon Casshidy ; dance, raffle, or spree of any sort, shape, or patthern nivir missed Solomon Casshidy, who, by the way, was the very life an' sowl of the gatherin's ; an' people would as soon think of doin' without the fiddler at one of these merry-makin's as without Solomon Casshidy. An' that just put me in mind that Solomon was the dandy hand at the fiddle ; the bate of him wasn't to be got between cock-crow an' candlelight the longest day in June. He would charm the heart of a whin-bush ; arrah, good luck to your wit, man, he'd

actially make the fiddle spake! They say it was as good as a sarcus to hear how he'd handle it.

But poor Solomon, good luck to him, soon come to the end of his tether, an', afther takin' all the fun he could out of the worl', he, as himself said, turned over a new laif an' begun to look at the other side of the picther. An' I'm thinkin' whatsomiver he seen on the other side of it must have been deuced onpleasant, for the rollickin', singin', laughin', fiddlin', reckless, ne'er-do-weel Solomon pulled a face on him the length of a tailyer's lapboord; an' if any of his ould comrades atttempted to make him convarsible on the fun that was goin' in any quarther of the countrhy, Solomon would ddrop his jaws, an' fetch a groan would frighten a corp'; an', "My frien'," he would say, "this is all vanity, vanity! Life is hollow, an' these frivolities are only snares spread in our paths by the devil."

Anyhow, Solomon was an althered man, an' where he would go formerly to honour the Sabbath by a rousin' game of *caman* with the good boys, he was now seen makin' his way to the meetin'-house with a Bible anondher his arm the size of a salt

box, an' as many hime-books as would set up a hawker in a daicent way of thradin', an' he obsarvin' naither to the right nor to the left, but away a thousand miles ahead of him, as if he was always thrying to make out the way to heaven somewhere in the skies foreninst him; an' where he would of another time be makin' his way across the countrry, maybe to the shouldher of Srual mountain for a spree, with the fiddle anondher his coat, ye might now meet him in the dusk of the evenin', still with the fiddle ondher the coat, but on a far betther errand—goin' to some prayer meetin' at Inver, or Killymard, or Ballyweel, or the devil only knows where; he wouldn't go within an ass's roar of a raffle-house; an' if you tould him there was to be a dance or any other wee divarshin in sich an' sich a place, he'd sthrive to put the breadth of a townlan' betwixt him an' it, for he said the devil was chained to the back stone of any house that there was a hornpipe played in.

Well, one evenin', it was in October, an' jist about night-fallin', Solomon was makin' his way for Billy Knox's of the head of the Gibe, where a great and very pious man, one Bartholomew Benjamin Rankin, was to

hold a prayer meetin' for the benefit of all the well-disposed sinners in that sthretch of countrry ; an' throth, it seems to me that, unless the Glibe's changed mortially within the last jinnyration, there must have been a daicent quantity of sinners in them same parts. But, as I was sayin', Solomon was this evenin' on the good arrand, with his fiddle peepin' out from ondher his coat—for ye see, Solomon's ould practice whin he was a sinner come in handy now that he was a saint, an' no prayer meetin' could be held without Solomon's fiddle to steady the voices, whin they joined to sing the himes. She was a splendid piece of a fiddle, an' Solomon, whin he turned over the new laif, was goin' out to brak her neck across the next ditch, whin he remembered how she might come in handy this way, so he said to himself (as he tould after) that "he'd make the occasion of his sins a steppin'-stone to new vartues, an' cause her that was hairtofore jiggin' him down to the place below, now fiddle him into heaven."

He thought to himself this evenin' that he'd jist light the pipe to keep him company as he jogged on, so where do ye think he'd ddrop into, on purpose to light it, but

ould Jimmy Higgerty's, the fairyman's, that I reharsed to ye about before. On layin' "Pagganinny," as he called the fiddle, down on a stool, whilst he was puttin' a screed of coal to the pipe, Jimmy Higgerty lifted her, an' dhrawin' the bow acrass her, he took a bar of a lively tune out of her, when Solomon jumped up as if he was strtruck.

"Higgerty, me good man," he says, "you have shocked me. Thim vain airs," siz he, "has been long unknown to that fiddle, an' I trusted that she would niver more be an instrhument that the divil would gamble for sowls on. Paice, paice, and dhraw not the bow in idle vanity again!"

"Arrah, good-morra to ye," siz Jimmy, that way back to him, "but it's delicate yer narves must have got intirely, lately. Throth, Mister Cassidy, I seen the time this wouldn't frightened ye one bit;" an' all at onces he strtruck up, "Go to the divil an' shake yerself," while poor Solomon stood thrimblin' in the middle of the flure like a man with the aguey. Whin Jimmy finished up with a flourish that would have delighted Solomon the days he was at himself (for, be the same token, Solomon was no miss at handlin' the bow naither),

he cut some quare figures with his left han' three times over the fiddle, an' handin' it to Solomon, he says: " May ye nivir have more raison to be frightened than by a jig from the same fiddle—that's all I say ! "

Poor Solomon didn't know the hidden mainin' of them words, or it would have made him look crooked ; nor he didn't know naither that Jimmy had put *pish-erogues* on the fiddle ; but all the same, he took it from him with a glum look enough, and afther praichin' an edifyin' sarmon on frivolities, an' death, an' judgment, to Jimmy Higgerty, he betook him on the road again.

There was a wondherful congregation of the sinners an' saints of the Glibe—but the sinners had the best of it anyhow, in regard to numbers—in Bill Knox's that night. An' Bartholomew Binjamin Rankin was there, an' it was as good as a sarmin in itself just to get one glance at his face. There was as much holiness an' piety in it, ye'd a'most think, as would save the sowls of a whole barony. Solomon, who now got all sorts an' sizes of respect, as bein' a reformed sinner, an' was looked up to with ten times as much honour and rivirence as was paid to them

that was saints all their life, got a sait, as was usual, beside the praicher. An' it's himself that was proud, an' he'd look down on the common crowd below with a most pityin' look on his face. An' the well-disposed ones in the congregation would look up at Solomon, an' then give a groan that ye might hear at Srual; an' Solomon would look down on the sinners an' give another groan that ye might hear him at Barnesmore; and then both Solomon an' the sinners would look up at' the rafthers, an' give a groan that ye might hear at Muckish. After some time, when they had got faistin' their sowls fairly well on Solomon, a hime was called out, a very solemn one. "An'," says the praicher, lookin' at Solomon, "our saintly brother here, of whom aich an' ivery heart in this gatherin' feels proud, an' whose pious ways are the glorification, admiration, an' edification of every true Christian since he gave up his ungodly life, an' turned onto the path of righteousness—brother Solomon will give us the keynote, an' lend us the aid of his unmusical box throughout."

Brother Solomon, be me socks, dhrew a face on him the length of his own fiddle, as

if he was thinkin' of his own unworthiness, poor man, an' says :

" It affords me a pious pleasure to ddraw my bow ondher the circumstances—that bow which so often snared me into the devil's sarvice ; but I thank God with my heart that I have long since departed from my wicked, wicked, unspakably vile an' sinful ways ; an' this han' has long since forgotten them vain and ungodly airs that at one time occupied every spare moment of my then unchristian life—long since, I say, have I buried deep in obligeen every remembrance of thim wicked tunes, an' the cunnin' of my han' is now only used for a far loftier an' betther purpose. Bretherin, I shall begin."

An' Solomon ddraws the bow across the fiddle, an' of all the hime tunes which was prented, what do ye think does he sthrike up? " Go to the devil an' shake yerself!" Och, it's as thtrue as I'm tellin' it to ye. But, *ochón*, if there wasn't consternation in that house, I'm a gentleman ! Solomon himself stopped suddent, for all the world lookin' like a stuck pig ; an' he looked at the praicher, an' the praicher looked at him, an' the congregation looked at both of them, an' then Solomon prayed

from his heart as he nivir prayed afore, that the Lord in His mercy might make the flure open and swallow him. The flure, though, as I suppose ye have guessed, did not open, but Bartholomew Binjamin's mouth did, an' he sayed, siz he :

“ Bretherin ! bretherin ! this is a sad fallin' away ! Alas ! alas ! Who should have thought that Brother Solomon, the reformed sinner, would have returned to his ould godless courses ! The rulin' passion, my dear bretherin, is so strhong in him—waxin' strhong with new strhength —that he has onvoluntarily bethrayed the devil that has again got hould on him. Bretherin, let us pray for him ! ”

An' in a jiffee the thunderstruck congregation were on their knees prayin' like Trojans for the delivery of poor Solomon from the devil. Solomon, of course, for appairance' sake, had to take to his knees, too, but between you an' me, it's meself's afeard that all the prayers he said would not fetch him very far on the way to the first milestone that leads to heaven. I'll wager whoiver heerd him, that his prayers were sweet ones, that the devil might saize ould Jimmy Higgerty an' carry him off body an' bones, an' give him a toastin' on a

special griddle down below. When they thought they had prayed long enough, an' that the devil was gone out of Solomon, they got up to their feet again, and they turned up the whites of their eyes till Bartholomew Binjamin announced that they would onces more put Brother Solomon's faith to the test, to see if he had profited by the few minutes' sperritual recreation that they had indulged in. Solomon lifted the bow, an' afore he started he turned up the whites of his eyes in the usual fashion, as if he was lookin' for guidance, but in his heart he was only callin' down another black curse on Jimmy Higgerty.

"Bretherin!" siz he, as solemn as a judge — "bretherin! The temper" (by which he meant the devil, of coorse) "possessed the fiddle, and not my humble self; in witness whereof just attind to the solemn an' addyfyin' air I will now produce for ye." An' down comes the bow on the fiddle, an' up starts that beautiful jig tune, "The Siege of Carrick"!

Och, tarnation to me waistcoat, but there was sich a scene in two minnits as would charm a dancin' masther! When Solomon played the first bar of it, he could as soon comb his head with his toes as he could

stop it. But that wasn't the best of it. Bartholomew Binjamin, instead of goin' into a cowld dead faint, as one would expect, begun to shuffle his feet in a suspicious way, an' afore ye'd say "thrapsticks" he was weltin' the flure like the broth of a boy, tearin' away at the jig like the ould Nick ! An' in the squintin' of yer eye there wasn't a sowl anondher the roof, man, woman, or child, saint or sinner, that wasn't whackin' away at it like the forties, iviry man of them leatherin' the flure like a thrasher, jumpin' up till their heads would a'most sthrike the rafters, an' yellin' like red Injins, whilst me brave Solomon played like a black, put new life into the fiddle at ivery squeak, an' gave the jiggers whatever wee encouragement that he could spare time from the fiddle for—

"Come, boys, yez haven't fair play to foot it properly here. Yez is the finest set at a jig that I have faisted me eyes on since I give up me ungodly ways, an' it would be a pity for not to give yez ivery privilege—it's a fine clear moonlight, an' we'll go outside where we'll have room an' fair play at it. Come along, me mirry, mirry lads !" An' Solomon fiddled away out of

the dure, an' the whole congregation leapt an' flung an' jigged it out in all possible an' onpossible shapes afther him. Och, they say it was a sight for sore eyes to see the capers that the party cut; ivery man-jack of them tryin' to see who could be crazier than his naybour; an' out they got that way on the road, like a lunatic asylum turned loose for a holiday; an' Solomon headed down the road in the direction of Donegal, while the whole countryside turned out when they heerd the yellin' an' fiddlin' an' prancin', an' seein' Solomon headin' them with the fiddle, an' Bartholomew Binjamin fillin' the front rank in company with his two feet, an' he jiggin' it away at the rate of a christenin'! The people were first inclined to laugh, but be the powdhers, the nixt thing they done was join in themselves, an' foot it away afther the fiddle ninety-nine times crazier than the congregation. An' hot foot they kept it goin', up hill an' down dale, over height an' hollow, with fresh batches joinin' in at ivery lane an' turn, an' Solomon, the boy, layin' into the fiddle at a rate as if he was gettin' a salary for it; an', be the boots, by the time they raiched the foot of the road, you nivir seen in all your born days a

harvest fair or a Repale meetin' as big as it was !

Here Solomon turned to the left, with the purcession still jiggin' it afther him, an' he nixt got onto the lane that leads up to the Killymard ould graveyard, an' over the stile, in among the graves, with the mirry company brakin' their necks over, afther him ; an' when they got in here, Solomon made thracks for a nate dandy bit of a tombstone in the centhre of the yard, an' upon it he h'isted himself, with Bartholomew Binjamin up beside him, whilst the remainder of the party reshuned their attitudes all roun' about, an' they fightin' like wild cats to see who would get pursession of the tombstones, for they saw they were as good as barn-doors for dancin' on. An' throgs, there might be purty good dancers there, but devil resave the one of them that Solomon and Bartholomew Binjamin couldn't take the shine out of. They had a bran' new tombstone, the pick and choice of all in the yard, an' if they didn't do it in royal style, an' cut a copy to the crowd, call me a cuckoo !

But what would ye have of it, but the nixt man lands on the scene was Sandy

Montgomery, the Recthor. He was passin' the road, an' seein' the fun in the graveyard, he come up in a t'undherin' passion to horsewhip ivery mother's sowl of them. But, sweet good luck to ye, if he didn't jump up on the fiddler's tombstone, an' catchin' Bartholomew Binjamin by the han', foot it away likewise.

An' it would have gone on to daylight in the mornin' if ould Jimmy Higgerty, the rascal, who followed the fun the whole way from the Glibe, for the purpose of tastifyin' to it—if he hadn't come behin' Solomon an' tould him to kick up his right heel, dhraw his left thumb three times over the sstrings of the fiddle, an' look over his left shoulther at the moon, an' then see what music he'd take out of it. No sooner said nor done ; an' all at once the tune changed to a hime tune, all mournful, an' ivery heel in the graveyard was paralysed. Ivery sowl of them looked at one another like they wor wakin' out of a dhraim.

Solomon himself dhrrew up, an' gave a bewildhered look all roun' him, an' then looked at Sandy Montgomery, who was standin' forenenst him on the stone, an' he as pale as a sheet. Ivery man of the three on the tombstone gave themselves up as lost men,

ruinated intirely, out an' out, afther makin' such spectacles of themselves for the counthry. The Recthor lost conthrol of himself completely, an' puttin' his fist anondher Solomon's nose, he says :

" Ye common scoundhril, ye ; ye've made me disgrace my cloth, ye cutthroat villain—"

But afore he could get out another word, Solomon, who had some of the spunk of his early days in him still, and was a thrifle hasty, besides that his dandher was riz in regards to the purty pickle he was in— Solomon ups with the fiddle, an' dhrawin' it roun' his head with a swing, he takes the Recthor across the noddle an' knocked him a'most into kingdom come, away off the tombstone. But, my hearty, in swingin' the fiddle, doesn't he catch Bartholomew Binjamin, who was standin' behind him, a nat~~e~~ little bit of a knock on the skull. So, now turnin' round to apologise to him, Bartholomew Binjamin ups with his fist an' plants it undher Solomon's nose, too, for he was just commencin' a narration.

" Ye mane, onprincipled, ungodly bla'-guard ! "

But Solomon couldn't stand this neither. He says to himself he might as well be

hung for a sheep as a lamb, and that when he knocked down the Recthor, he might with an aisier conscience knock down a praicher. So he took the praicher a wallop with the fiddle that left him sprawlin' in the Recthor's lap with his heels uppermost, and Solomon leapt from the tombstone, an' off through the crowd for the bare life, wallopin' them right an' left. They all slunk home afther a while with their tails between their legs, but poor Solomon was the worst of all. He made "Pagganinny" into smithereens —what remained of her. An' he didn't lift his head for twelve months afther.

THE WISDOM OF DARK PATHRICK

THERE was wanst upon a time, as the oul' stories goes—it might 'a' been five hundhred years ago, or it might 'a' been ten hundred years ago, or it might 'a' been double that; meself doesn't rightly know any more nor that it was a *laghie* wheen iv years ago, anyhow—an' the Lord Mayor himself of Dublin had a great fallin' out with the lan'lord of the Head Inns there. The Lord Mayor an' this same lan'lord had been great oul' cronies entirely up till the time they fell out. As thick as thieves they had always, up till this, been. They wor like a pair of magpies in good weather—ye couldn't see wan of them without findin' the other close by. But behould ye! as I sayed, somethin' or other comed atween them an' sundhered them, an' they had a great fallin' out altogether, an' a bitther wan. An' whatsomiver it was that sundhered them, it wasn't the Lord Mayor's fault, anyhow; beca'se a good-natureder man or a better-hearted

niver breathed than him. The lan'lord of the Head Inns, though, was a cantank'rus nadger, an' it was the wondher iv the wurrl' why iver the poor Lord Mayor tuk till him, or howiver he stuck till him ; a cantank'rus, crabbed oul' cadger he was, that couldn't agree with nobody, or nobody couldn't agree with him, for he was iver an' always sthrivin' to get the inside an' the upper han' of ivery wan iver he fell in with. But the Lord Mayor, bein' a simple, kindly-hearted craiture, as I sayed afore, somehow managed to pull along with the oul' nadger, till this thing (whatsomiver it was) turned up an' parted them, with bitterness ranklin' in the black heart of the lan'lord.

The designin' oul' buck immediately laid himself out to plan how he'd vent his spleen and revenge himself on the Lord Mayor. An' he soon thought he foun' a gran' way—for the devil was surely helpin' him. The Lord Mayor, it seems, was in the habit, on his way home till his own dinner, of dhroppin' in to see the lan'lord of the Head Inns ; an' it usually happened that the lan'lord would just at that very time be shooperintendin' the spreadin' of the dinner for his lodgers, an' the Lord

Mayor would, of course, step into the parlour where the dinner was bein' laid out, an' have a chat with the lan'lord, an' a pleasant sniff of the dinner, moreover—which always did him a mighty share of good, for the Head Inns's dinners was iver the very best (there's no denyin' it), an' smelt mortal fine. Very well. The lan'-lord of the Head Inns, runnin' over iverything in his mind, took stock of this, an' "Me buck," says he till himself, an' referrin' to the Lord Mayor—"me buck," says he, "I have ye there. If I haven't, I'll let me pantry-boy twist me nose for me."

With small loss of time, he spit on his stick, an' thrudged off to the foremost liwyer in the city, tuk his advice on the matther, an', that bein' favourable, there an' then at wanst enthered a great law-shoot again' the Lord Mayor of Dublin to recover a large debt off the Lord Mayor, the cost of smellin' his dinner every day for the past ten years—which would come till a mighty great sum when it would be all added up, an' would sartintly ruinate the poor Lord Mayor out an' out, if the lan'lord won his case, an' laive him a beggar on the sthreets of Dublin. An' then the scoundhril went an' employed all of

the foremost liwyers in Irelan' to fight his case; an' all of them sayed he had a mortal good case, and was sartint to win it. The poor Lord Mayor, seein' beggary starin' him in the face, didn't employ a liwyer at all, at all, only wan; beca'se he couldn't afford more if he was goin' to be called on to pay all the big damages that the case would come to.

Well, there was a terrible great furore all over Dublin when they heerd of the case the lan'lord of the Head Inns had again' the Lord Mayor, an' nothing else was talked of from end to wynd of the city; an' all Dublin was at wanst divided intil parties, wan party sayin' that the Lord Mayor 'ud surely win the case, an' the other party swearin' that the lan'lord of the Head Inns had all the laws of the lan' on his side, an' would sartintly be given heavy damages again' the Lord Mayor. An' among the liwyers an' judges even there was a hot time; they divided intil two camps, an' banged law an' law-books an' no end of abuse at others' heads over it.

The day of the thrial it was looked forrid to by all hands with the greatest excitement. An' when the day come, the people was packed in the coort-house like herrin's in

a hogshead ; an' outside the coort-house an' for as good as a quarther of a mile around it on all sides, the crowds swarmed an' pushed an' crushed, an' swore an' fought, an' did all sorts of outrageous things that an excited crowd 'ill do. There was twelve judges picked out of all Irelan' sat on the bench to thry the case, an' wan head judge over them all—the very greatest liwyer an' brilliantest judge in the lan'. There niver was such a case in Irelan' afore, an' there hasn't been anything like such a case since. The thrial it begun afther br'akfast-time on a Monday, on a long June day, an' it was be candlelight, on the third evenin' afther, that the last witness finished givin' his evidence, for they had no end of cooks, an' great connoshoors (they called them), an' famous aiters an' dhrinkers, an' celebrated liwyers, all givin' their evidence an' their opinions on the matther ; an' afther that the lan'lord's counsel an' the Lord Mayor's counsel got aich a whole leelong day till himself to wind up an' explain the pros an' cons of the case, an' make it a deuced sight complicateder than ever it had been, for the help an' guidance of the thirteen lads that slept in relays on the bench.

An' then, afther that, it tuk them thirteen lads another leelong day to considher an' weigh the evidence, an' make their minds as to the rights an' the wrongs of the case—which brought the thrial on to Sathurday night; an' there was many's an' many's the wan there that for the whole six days niver riz off their saits or left the coort-house, but had their victuals passed in to them over the heads of the crowd.

Late on Sathurday night, then, the decision was given. The thirteen judges come out of their room in a sthring, an' tuk their saits wan be wan on the bench, with the head judge in the centhre. An' when they had their saits taken, the head judge got up, an' afther a long paramble, announced their decision, which was that six of the judges was for givin' the lan'lord of the Head Inns damages, an' six more was dead again' it, an' he himself couldn't rightly see his way which side was in the right, an' which side he should give his vardict for!

So there they wor, afther all their throuble, an' all their bother, an' all their hubbub—there wor the lan'lord an' the Lord Mayor, an' the liwyers an' judges, an' all Dublin, thrown back where they

started, an' left to go for wan another over the case again !

Well, they had nothin' for it, only back from the beginnin', an' thry the whole case over again, an' that they did. But beould ye ! when the judges come out on the bench to give their decision this time, there was two of them had their thumbs in a sling, an' wan of them come on a crutch, an' the remaindher had either black eyes or broken noses, or there was some of their faytures missin' altogether ; an' their var-dict wasn't a particle more satisfactory than before.

An' afther a third thrial, there wasn't a sowl of the third to show up on the bench, barrin' the head judge himself ; an' three docthors in the coort had to go intil the room to set his ribs afore he was able to be carried out to give the same oul' vardict.

Afther that a bad time begun in Dublin, an' no day passed that there wasn't blood-shed on the public sthreets, an', still worse, in the very bosom of private families that, up till this misfortunate case, was known an' respected as morals [models] of family affection for all the province of Leinster. It was a bad state of affairs, sure enough ;

it was goin' daily from bad to worse, an' there was no tellin' where it was goin' to stop, if something wasn't done soon an' suddint to end it all.

Then there was a counciltation called of all the judges, an' all the Gover'ment officials, an' all the greatest men of Irelan', to see if they couldn't arrive at some decision on this wondherful case ; but the bloodshed that flowed from that counciltation-room far surpassed anything that had gone afore, an' the counciltation bruck up in disordher, an' aich man was carried home on his own dure.

An' when the king seen this, an' seen that the countrry was fast fallin' intil a dhreadful civil war—for be this time the contention had spread, an' sides wor taken in the dispute all over the len'th an' brea'th of Irelan'—when the king, I say, seen this, he called a counciltation of all of his own ministhers, an' statesmen, an' advisers, to considher what was best to be done ; an' the result of this was that a proclamation was give out, makin' it known to all whom it might consarn that if there was any wan man betwixt the four says of Irelan' who could come forrid an' give a proper vardict in this great case, he'd be

loaded with wealth an' honours, an' his name writ down in the histh'ry-books of Irelan' for all ginnirations to read.

Well, as ye may feel sartin, this proclamation wasn't out four-an'-twinty hours till the roads leadin' till Dublin was swarmin' with iv'ry little tuppence-ha'-penny wiseacre that was used to layin' down the law on his own du'ghill-steddin', an' aich of who thought himself the wisest man in Irelan'. The king an' his counsellors had a purty busy time of it listenin' to the schaims aich of these philosophers had to offer for the settlement of the case, an' ivery single schaim was sillier an' more nonsensical than the other. An' when the king an' his counsellors had got through with them all, they foun' they had been only throttin' round a bush all the time, an' were at the same place still; only Irelan' was now in a hundhred times a disturbeder state, for ivery man whose vardict was refused be the king went back home, an' riz a followin' an' a faction that swore to him an' his doctrine, an' vowed vingeance on all who believed in any other body's.

Now, throughout all this there was livin' an' workin' away quietly at his little patch

of groun' in Donegal a little black-headed, black-whiskered man who the neighbours called Dark Pathrick, an' who was known for his rough wisdom an' cuteness all over his own barony. If there iver come up any mighty hard point, it went as a sayin' among the people: "Why, that would puzzle Dark Pathrick himself!" An' the question would puzzle Dark Pathrick was given up by the cliverest heads in the barony as a hopeless case entirely. As I sayed, Dark Pathrick had been quietly workin' his little patch of groun' during all the time Irelan' was in a roolye-boolye over this great case, an' he sayed nothin'. But when all resorts had been thried, an' failed to discover a proper vardict in the case, an' Irelan' was left in a worse state than when they begun, Dark Pathrick pitched the spade out of his fist wan day, an' went intil the house, an' washed an' shaved himself, an' threw on his best little duds of clothes. Then he tied up in a red handkerchief a few articles, an' a cake of well-buttered oat-bread, an' puttin' it on the end of his oak staff over his shouldher, tuk the broad road. The neighbours, when they seen him, come rushin' out, an' sayed: "Prosper the journey, Pathrick;

but where are ye goin'?" "To Dublin city, good neighbours," Pathrick made answer, in his usual kindly way. "To Dublin city!" says they, in surprise. "An' for to do what, Pathrick *a thaisge?*" "For to give a vardict in this tarrible case," says Pathrick. "Och, wishna, wishna, Pathrick," says they; "don't be foolish, poor man! You're both wise an' cliver here among the neighbours, an' we know ye an' think a dale of ye--there's none we think more of; but if ye go up to Dublin among the l'arned an' well-dhressed an' polite gintlemen ye'll be meetin' there, why, Pathrick asthore, they'll make ye a laughin'-stock. An' if them l'arned heads, besides, wasn't able to come till a vardict, don't ye know in yer heart an' sowl, poor Pathrick, that you'll niver be able to do it?" They maint' the very best be Pathrick, beca'se they had great regards for him; but Pathrick only smiled, an' sayed: "Well, I often promised meself that I'd see Dublin afore I'd die; so if the worst comes to the worst, me journey 'll not be for nothin', anyhow. Good-bye," says he, "an' God's blessin' remain with yez till I come back." "Good-bye, Pathrick," says they, "good-bye; an' God sen' ye safe--

an' sen' ye back to us, too, a wiser man." An' Pathrick, with his stick an' little bundle, was gone.

Dark Pathrick had an adventurous journey, but he reached Dublin at length; an' when he come there, he axed the first man he met to direct him to the king's castle. "For why do you want the king's castle?" says the man, says he, lookin' at poor Pathrick, an' his stick an' little bundle, an' his ill-fittin' counthry clothes. "For why," says he, "do you want the king's castle?" "Beca'se," says Dark Pathrick, "I want to give the vardict in this great lawshoot." When the man heerd this he laughed that hearty that a crowd gathered; an' when he toul' the crowd the arrand Pathrick was on, the crowd looked at Pathrick an' laughed. Poor Pathrick wasn't used to bein' laughed at; he didn't know the ways of Dublin jakeens, an' this thraitment cut him to the heart. But he was too spunky to let these fools see it. He just dismounted the bundle off the end of the stick, an' as soon as the crowd seen the sort of a grip he got of the stick, they very wisely fell back to the wan side an' the other an' let Pathrick pass. But they follid him along Dublin Sthreet, an' wan

of them got up on a pole a big printed card to say :

" THIS IS DARK PATHRICK FROM DONEGAL, COME UP TO GIVE THE VARDICT IN THE GREAT LAWSHOOT ! "

An' as they went along the crowd swelled an' swelled, till when they come to the king's gates there was an immense gatherin' around him entirely. An' when Dark Pathrick tould the sodjers who he was an' the arrand he had come upon, they joined the crowd in laughin' their hearty skinful ; an' when Dark Pathrick, flashin' scorn at all of them, thried to push past them to get intil the castle, they put the point of their swords to his stomach an' made him back an' back till he near a'most bruck his backbone with the bendin' backwards ; an' at that both the sodjers an' the crowd laughed twicet louder than afore.

But the laughin' brought the king himself to the window, an' he put out his head to inquire what was the matther. The sodjers an' the crowd pointed out to him Dark Pathrick, an' sayed that this was a man who had come from Donegal to give the vardict in the great lawshoot, an' then they laughed again. " For what are yez laughin' ? " says the king. " Or is that the

proper way to thrate strangers when they come intil yer town?" Then he gazed over Dark Pathrick, who was lookin' all the scorn was in him at the miserable wretches that seen fit to jeer him. "Do yez think," says the king then to them again, "that beca'se a man comes from Donegal he knows nothing, or that beca'se he's poorly dhressed he's to be jeered at? I see this poor man, an' I see yous—an' I see, too, that there's some purty consaitry men among yez; an' this I'm goin' to say for yer edification: that I wouldn't swap this poor ill-dhressed man from Donegal for any twenty of the men that thinks most about themselves in the crowd. Just," says the king, "put that in yer pipes an' shmoke it. Clear off with yez now, or be the piper that played afore Moses I'll call out me regimint of throopers an' run yez down, ye unmannery, undher-bred lot of scullions an' pot-wallopers, ye!" says the king. "Small wondher," says he, "Dublin has got such a bad name! An' if I iver again, as long as I live an' reign, hear tell of the likes of such happenin', I'll hang ivery tenth man of ye afore his own dure, for an example an' a warnin' to the other nine. As for yous," says he then to the

sodjers, "considher yerselves undher arrest till I have time to attend to yez further. You, Dark Pathrick," says he, "as I undherstand that's yer name, step within the castle. I'll ordher ye a repast, an' afther ye've aiten an' rested I shall be pleased to enthertain any proposition ye've got to make to me regardin' this tarrible lawshoot."

An' afther he had rested an aiten, Dark Pathrick was taken into the parlour to the king, an' saited upon a chair of baiten goold. An' not wan whit daunted he was, no more nor if he had been sittin' on a shtrow siostog on wan side of his own hearth, addhressin' his next-door neighbour sittin' upon the other side. For Dark Pathrick set small store by king or coortier, unless they had brighter wits or bigger hearts than other men, an' then he knew how to respect them accordingly.

Dark Pathrick give the king an insight intil who an' what he was, an' toul' him that he'd like to have a thry at givin' a vardict in this lawshoot.

"Me good man," says the king, "an' so ye will—an' why shouldn't ye! If ye fail atself—for I've come," says he, with a sigh, "to expect nothin' but failure now

—if ye fail atself, ye'll make a brighter failure than many's the consaiteder man thried his han' an' his head at the same case within the last six months."

"I thank ye," says Dark Pathrick, with his best curtshy. "An' I'd like to have the case thried afore me as soon as is convaynient for all consarned."

All consarned were notified. An' very soon the rumour of it spread that a man be the name of Dark Pathrick from Donegal, who give himself out as mighty knowledgable intirely, was goin' to thry the great lawshoot, an' thry to come to a vardict on it. So on the day of the thrial the coort-house was, this time, packed ten times thicker than it iver had been afore—an' this time, too, all the judges an' lawyers an' lawmakers in Irelan' that could either creep, crawl, or walk to it was there occupyin' their saits hours afore the thrial begun at all ; for they wor all on their edge to know what new vardict this sthrange, ignorant, poor man from Donegal could think of, afther all the best an' brightest brains of the countrhy havin' thried to give a vardict in vain. Dark Pathrick he come in an' tuk his sait on the bench. All eyes was turned upon him, to read

him an' size him up; an' all of them was astonished to see this poor, ignorant (as they thought), an' ill-dressed man from Donegal sittin' down upon the judges' bench as cool as if it was upon a siostog among neighbours in his own chimley-corner in Donegal; not the laist taste of narvousness did he show as he looked calmly over all that congregation of great an' famous judges an' counsellors, an' nobility of all ranks, an' all the high-up genthry an' fashionable ladies of Dublin an' the five provinces. "He's too ignorant," says some of them, "to know the great company he's among." An' these people in their own hearts give Dark Pathrick a fool's pardon.

Well, to make a long story short (as tale-tellers put it), the thrial it begun, an' went on an' on—Dark Pathrick sittin' with his eyes half closed all the time, listenin' to all, but sayin' nothin', an' axin' no questions. "Faith, a dhroll judge, him!" says the people.

But when all the witnesses an' all the experts upon both sides had been heerd, an' the counsellers upon both sides had spoke themselves emp'y and wound up the case, there got up a great silence in the

coort ; every mother's sowl held his breath to hear what the vardict of Dark Pathrick was goin' to be. Dark Pathrick slowly opened his eyes an' gathered himself together on the bench, like a man would be comin' out of dhraims.

"Call the lan'lord of the Head Inns again," says Dark Pathrick to the coort crier.

An' the coort crier did as he was bid. An' the lan'lord of the Head Inns stepped up intil the witness-box wanst more.

"For the smell of how many dinners, tell me again," says Pathrick, "do you claim compinsation, lan'lord ?"

"A dinner a day for ten years," says the lan'lord of the Head Inns. "Yer clerk of coort 'ill make up," says he, "how many that comes till."

"Thirty-six hundhred an' fifty," says Dark Pathrick, at his aise, to the surprise of all, without waiting for the clerk of coort, who had just begun sharpenin' his pencil for the purpose of figurin' it up.

"Thirty-six hundhred an' fifty," says Pathrick. "An' now tell me, me good man, by vartue of yer oath, how much you calculate each dinner to have been worth ?"

"The smell of the dinner, does yer honour

mean?" says the lan'lord; for he calculated he'd lose nothin' by bein' a bit polite to Dark Pathrick.

"The dinners—the dinners themselves," says Pathrick. "I'll look afther the smell."

"Well, my dinners was always noted as bein' the very best an' highest-classed dinners in all Dublin—nothin' used but the best of materials, an' first-class cooks," says the lan'lord of the Head Inns. "An', believe me, I'm puttin' it at the modher-atest figure I can afford, when I say that each dinner was grand valuey for two shillin's. The clerk of the coort is a remarkable good figurer, an' I b'lieve he'll be able to figure up what a dinner a day at two shillin's should come till in ten years."

"Three hundhred an' sixty-five poun's, naught, an' nopence," says Dark Pathrick, spaikin' like a riddy-rackoner, to the dumfoundhered surprise of ivery sowl in the coort. "I thank both you an' the clerk of the coort," says he.

"An' now," says Pathrick, "did you hear the dafindant in this case swear that at laist a quarther of yer dinners smelled positively bad, an' were a delusion an' a snare? Remimber ye're on yer oath."

"I heerd that," says the lan'lord; "an' for the sake of makin' yer road to a vardict smooth, I'll consent to give in that sixty-five pounds' worth of the dinners maybe didn't smell genuine, be raison of mistakes in the cooks' parts."

"Why," says all the liwyers an' judges in the coort—"why," says they among themselves, "this Dark Pathrick is gettin' the case more *in-thrick-at* than iver it was, an' deeper in the mire."

"Now," says Dark Pathrick, "you lan'-lord can remove to the wan side, an' I want the dafindant in this case to step up beside ye."

So up the Lord Mayor steps into the witness-box beside the lan'lord, both of them glarin' at other like caged wil' cats.

"Lord Mayor," says Pathrick, "I want you—or yer frien's for ye—to produce three hundhred good goold sovereigns an' sixty-five counterfeit wans."

The Lord Mayor he got purple in the face with rage. "I refuse," says he, stampin' his foot—"I refuse the vardict!"

"Sure, we knew how it would be," says the judges an' counsellers in the coort among themselves.

An' instantly a mighty hubbub got up

through the whole coort: the people shouted out that was the worst an' unjestest vardict iver yet was given, an' they'd not have it; an' looked wondherful like that blood was about to flow again, when the king—for of course he had a sait in coort throughout the whole thrial—got up an' sayed, says he :

“If I rightly undherstand, the vardict isn't yet given ?”

Says Dark Pathrick, “Yer Highness does rightly undherstand.”

“Then,” says the king, “do as ye're bid, Lord Mayor.”

The people consented to settle down a bit tell they'd find what was the upshot of this move goin' to be. An' the Lord Mayor an' his friends went away, an' brought back with them a little box out of which they counted down upon the bench, to the satisfaction of the king an' the people an' lan'lord, an' all, three hundhred shinin' good goold sovereigns, an' a bag out of which they counted out sixty-five countherfeit sovereigns made of gilded copper.

“Put them good sovereigns intil the box again, an' close it,” says Pathrick; “an' put the bad wans intil the bag again, an'

tie it loosely, givin' them plenty of room to rowl about."

The whole coort now stood on its tippy-toes, in the greatest state of puzzle an' threpidation.

"Lan'lord," says Dark Pathrick, "be good enough to state, for all our informations, what is now the contents of that box an' of that bag."

"That box," says the lan'lord, "contains three hundred good goold sovereigns, an' the bag sixty-five bad wans."

"Lord Mayor," says Dark Pathrick, "take up that box in wan hand, an' that bag in the other."

The Lord Mayor, all wondherment, did as he was bid ; an' the king himself an' the whole coort stopped their breaths an' craned their necks to hear what was comin' next.

"Lord Mayor," says Dark Pathrick, "shake that box be the lan'lord's lug."

The Lord Mayor shuck it, an' a mighty great jingle it made.

"Lan'lord, what do ye hear ?" says Dark Pathrick.

"The jingle," says the lan'lord, "of three hundred good goold sovereigns."

"Which pays you," says Dark Pathrick,

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"for the smell of three hundhred pounds' worth of good dinners."

"Lord Mayor," says Dark Pathrick again, "shake that bag be the lan'lord's lug."

Which the Lord Mayor did, with all the veins of his heart makin' the devil's own horrible din.

"Lan'lord," says Dark Pathrick, "what's that ye hear?"

"The rattle," says the lan'lord, "of sixty-five bad sovereigns."

"Which pays you," says Dark Pathrick, "for the smell of sixty-five pounds' worth of bad dinners."

"My vardict," says he, "is given. Go all of yez to yer homes, good people, an' for the future abide in Christian paice!"

For the space of wan minute afther, ye could hear yerself thinkin' in that coort. Then the applaas that went up shuck the oul' walls of the buildin' till ye'd think it was merac'lous it didn't tumble in atop of all. Liwyers an' judges an' genthry, an' every livin' soul present, ruz to their feet like wan man an' called on the king to make Dark Pathrick, there an' then, high judge over all Irelan'. "Me own sintiments," says the king. But Dark

Pathrick, with the self-same coolness that had stuck to him throughout, got to his feet, an' thanked both the king an' the people, an' sayed he had no desires for the honour, an' he wouldn't have it. He had, he sayed, done nothin' but what he considhered to be his bounden duty, an' hadn't showed any cliverness whatsomiver above plain, blunt common sense. He was glad, he sayed, they appreciated his vardict, an' glad to think that he was the humble means of puttin' a stop to the tarrible state of affairs that existed over this case, an' the tarrible spillin' of blood that had been takin' place, an' was goin' day an' daily from bad to worse. He was glad, too, he sayed, that those present had come to give in, that beca'se a man come from Donegal, an' was poor an' ill-dressed, he wasn't necessarily ignorant an' a fool. He axed them to thrait the poor an' the sstranger in future with due respect, thanked them again, wished them all a very good day, an' slipped away.

An' early the next mornin' there was a dark little man, with a small red bundle on a stick, pushin' north on the road from Dublin to Donegal.

WHEN MYLES MAGUIRE MELTED

A STORY OF THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

I

MYLES MAGUIRE'S dark countenance had always a stern look on it, but when he reached O'Rourke's letter his look grew a great deal blacker and sterner.

He read it again, aloud, for the benefit of little old Johnnie Gavigan, his clerk ; and his tone was cuttingly sarcastic :

“ DEAR MR. MAGUIRE,—Next Thursday, you will remember, is Patrick's Day. The men are pressing me for a holiday, or at the least a half-holiday. Two-thirds of them belong to societies that take part in the procession—and some of the men are expected to be there officially. I would like to give them their wish. Won't you please approve? We have progressed so well with the building since the beginning of February that we can easily afford it—there is now no doubt but that we will

have it finished easily before the expiration of the contract time. Please reply at once saying that I have your approval.

“Faithfully,

“PATRICK ALOYSIUS O’ROURKE.”

“Gavigan, Pathrick Aloysius O’Rourke is too damned impudent to have the nose on him to ask such a thing. And he thinks, too, I can’t see through him. He’s as thransparent as a dry-goods winda to me. The scoundhrel means that he wants to sthraddle to some old crate of a horse, the leavings of a livery stable, and wave a square yard of green calico alongside that procession on Pathrick’s Day. What do you think of such mortal impudence, Gavigan ? ”

Poor Johnnie curled up within himself ; for he had been done the immortal honour of being named a marshal for that day ; he had put past enough money to hire a horse ; and he had been trying to muster up enough courage to ask Mr. Maguire for the holiday. He shrunk in his shell, and did not reply.

“Write O’Rourke at once these words, and send them be a messenger : ‘I’d see you and the two-thirds of the men who are as big fools as yourself damned first. I

am going up there myself on Thursday, to see how many men will be dismissed to the devil for staying away from their work.'—Have you that down?—' If that procession of out-of-works, lazy divils, and tom-fools goes along Twenty-third Street, and if one of your men lifts the tail of their eye to look at them, I'll be there to order you to give him his dismissal.' Let Patrick Aloysius O'Rourke put that in his pipe and smoke it."

Johnnie Gavigan sighed deeply but softly as he wrote:

" 271 BROADWAY, Tuesday morning.

" DEAR MR. O'ROURKE,—Much as I should wish it otherwise, I regret extremely that I cannot possibly afford to let the men get a holiday on the occasion of the coming festival which, as Irishmen, we all honour. I sincerely trust the good men and true who on that day turn out to do honour to St. Patrick and Ireland will be favoured with glorious weather, and that the procession will surpass—if that be possible—those of former years in numbers, respectability, order, and general *éclat*.

" Very sincerely,

" MYLES MAGUIRE."

Mr. Maguire, contractor and builder,

had been knitting his brows over another letter whilst Johnnie Gavigan was, with a clamorous pen, scratching the foregoing.

"Gavigan," said he, "the wurrl' is going mad."

Johnnie was not as much startled as might have been expected by this piece of amazing intelligence—and for the good reason that his master had been springing it on him every morning for the last five-and-twenty years.

"Just read that!"

Johnnie took over the documentary evidence, first impressions from which only tended to prove that the world was going inky and going smoky. Where blots of ink did not conceal it, the paper displayed that rich yellow coating which is only to be obtained by careful seasoning in a cabin where a considerable quantity of the turf smoke, instead of going out, as intended by the chimney, crawls and creeps and curls, with loving fondness, around the household gods before making its exit by the deficiency at the door-head. The reminiscence that from the document penetrated Johnnie's nostrils brought a big tear into his eye; the roar of Broadway died suddenly, Myles Maguire's office melted away,

and Johnnie, a gossoon, barefoot, ragged, and happy, was on a siostog of straw by a turf fire, in a little smoky cabin on an Irish hillside, and a clear-skinned, bright-faced woman in a linen cap was spinning, and crooning a soft song in Gaelic. Ah!—

“Gavigan, wake up! or what the divil are ye dhraimin’ about? I asked ye to read that letter.”

Johnnie started. And he read (with some difficulty, for the calligraphy was certainly immature):

“CORRACLAMP UPPER, MEENADHRING P.O.

“COUNTY OF TYRONE, June the 3d, 1893.

“DEAR UNCKLE MYLES,—I take up my pen to write you these few lines, hoping it will find you as, thank God, it leevs us at present in the best of helth, exect wee Jaimsie has the hoop and coff. Dear Unckle Myles I go to school to Master Rainey every day in my life and he says I am a notorayus scollar, and that I was born to be a priest, which I want to be very bad. But of course my poor father he has not the muney to spare to make a priest out of me. Michael Burns of Tullyalt that was in America ten yeers and five in Pencilvainy, says it is far cheeper to be a priest in the States. So, as everyone comes home tells how rich Unckle Myles is, I

thought I would ask you to pay my pasage out there, and I would then soone ern enough of muney to get priested, and I would say my first Mass then for you, and I would pay you back my pasage muney very soone. Dear Unckle, ont you please to send me it, and its youll be the proud man when Im the parish priest of New York some day, pleese God. My father he cant give me my pasage muney, for you kno he has a hard struggil, and the spotty cow, the one we called the Master bekase she had a proud walk with her just like Master Rainey, she got elf-shot on the hill a month agoe and died, and we have only Horny left. My mother she ust always say when I was wee, that she would like to see her wee Donoch a priest, but she stopt tocking of it now this many year. She doesnt kno I am writing to you for my pasage or she wouldnt let me, for I asked her to let me write to you for the lone of some muney to buy another cow, and to buy her a dress, and she got very angry with me and then bust into crying, and she went down to the room and cried a long time with the dore shut. I will be thirteen yeers next bone-fire night, and I am a able big fellow, and able to work hard in America. I send you all our loves, and my mothers love, for I kno she would send it, for she always gives out a prair for you every knight when we are at the Rosary, for God to guard, guide, and prosper

Uncle Myles, and keep his heart right.
Write soone, and I lay down my pen and
ink and remain,

“Your affectionit nefew,

“DONOCH MCATEER.

“P.S.—Please write soone.”

When Johnnie Gavigan laid down the letter he inserted a knuckle under each glass of his spectacles, and forced something out of his blinking eyes, though his employer glared fiercely at him.

“Sir,” said he, with a bold courage that astonished Myles Maguire, “what answer will I give? Or I suppose you prefer to answer that yourself? Can I get you a draft?”

“Gavigan!” and all of poor Johnnie’s impromptu courage was instantly startled out of him—“you *are* an ass!”

If silence gives consent, Johnnie in his still fright might be said to have given sacred information of the statement.

After a little, when Myles Maguire saw that his clerk was properly remorseful, he said in calm, firm tones: “There’s no answer, Gavigan, to that foolish youngster’s scribble. I showed ye that letter that ye might read it in connection with the wan from O’Rourke, and see for yourself that

the Irish here is as great idiots as at home, and the Irish at home as great idiots as they are here. Here's these poor fools of O'Rourke's that are wrastlin' with the wurrl' and sthrivin' with all their might just to earn as much as 'ill keep the life in them—here they are wantin' to lose half a day to go processhin' with a crowd of equally damned fools, thrappin' themselves out in green ribbons, and squandherin' a couple of days' pay for the pleasure of trottin' behind a web of green calico, throwin' out their chests and throwin' up their chins, and steppin' on time to some oul' rantin' air that their great-grandfathers used to dance to. And then here's these people in Irelan'—me own sister, me own sister Ellen, no less—turnin' a child's head with foolish notions about becomin' a priest or a praicher, when it would be fitter (both for themselves and him) that they were teachin' him which fist to put foremost on a spade-handle ; and keepin' him at school every day, when it's in the ditch-sheugh they should have him half the time. No wonder! no wonder! Small wonder there's poverty and hardships in Irelan', and plenty of want in Ameriky. It's seven-an'-thirty

years, Gavigan, since I and me little bundle were thrown out of the ship on American soil, without the face of a friend to greet me, or as much as an acquaintance to say, 'There ye are, Myles Maguire, and the devil send ye may prosper!' I was sixteen bare years of age. I bent my back, and put my hands to, the day afther I landed, and for hard years wrought the very soul of me out through me fingers. I met no friends, and made none—what's more I wanted none, and wouldn't have them. I kept myself clear of all from home: they're never a help—always a hindhrance; if they came to me wanst, they soon found their welcome wouldn't keep warm for a second visit; and so they were soon shaken off. I saw that in Ameriky, if a man wanted to go ahead, it took him to think of himself, and himself only, all the time; forget Ireland, it's Pathrick's days an' its poverty. I did that. And so signs on it, Myles Maguire, the poor delicate child that then jumped on to a quay at the foot of New York with his belongin's under his arm, and twenty-two shillin's and sixpence ha'penny in his pocket, is now Mr. Myles Maguire, contractor and builder, honoured and respected, and wan

of the leadin' men in his line in New York City, with several hundred men in his employ, and a bank account that I'll say nothin' of, bekase I'm not a boastin' man. Gavigan, there's an example for yer foolish Irish to copy afther! What do ye say to that, Gavigan?"

Johnnie, as he stroked his beard, did not reply audibly. But he was thinking: "I am only a poor clerk myself, worth just sixteen dollars a week, and with a wife and family, and a struggle with the wurrl' always on me hands,—yet Myles Maguire with the big bank account, and no wan in the wurrl' to fret about but yerself, I would cry bitterly if I was compelled to swap places with you, an' have take over your heart into the bargain."

Johnnie Gavigan was, of course, one of the foolish Irish.

II

"A GLORYUS day this for the procession, sir." Myles Maguire was standing on the rear platform of a Broadway car, and by way of reply to the remark, scowled severely at the conductor who made it, and scowled at the bunch of

shamrocks he sported in his cap. The conductor, quite disconcerted, whistled up "God save Ireland!" and repeated the remark to the next man who boarded. And when at the sharp turn on Fourteenth Street the conductor sang out "Hold fast!" *after* Mr. Maguire had only just saved himself from being thrown off the car, Mr. Maguire felt he would like to kick that conductor. A poor working-man, with his little lunch in his hand, coming on the car here, raised his hat to the shamrock—whereat Mr. Maguire muttered something impolite, and fumed inwardly as if a personal insult had been flung in his face. "And maybe," he added to himself, "that poor fool hasn't the second quarter to rub against the first." A few blocks farther, an old woman who had been helped on by a policeman, fixing her eyes on the shamrock, muttered a prayer in Gaelic. The proud conductor plucked from his hat a sprig of the shamrock (though it cost him a pang) and presented it to the old woman, who kissed it passionately. Mr. Maguire, disdaining even to convey an order to the conductor, himself pulled the cord, and bounced from the car at the next corner. "Damn yez all!" he said, "I'll walk it."

He did walk it. But the reverence of that poor working-man, and the passionate love of that old woman, for a bit of a green weed preyed upon his mind—*preyed* upon it. “Here am I, Myles Maguire, contractor and builder and rich man, without either time or inclination for this—this—damned nonsense; and there’s people as poor as God made them, an’ the wurrl’ against them, and they—they—oh, damn it all!” Flung out from windows were greens flags, to which the burly drivers of two waggons raised their hats as they passed, their eyes dancing with some gleeful remembrance. Most of the waggoners had stuck upon their horses’ harness little green flags, each of which represented two schooners of lager beer foregone. Hotel-waiters, motormen, hundreds of hurrying foot passengers, sported some piece of green—a very few, with pardonable pride, displayed the shamrock. The brightness of the morning seemed, in the eyes of all these, to blend with the brightness of heart that shone out. And, strangely, the very poorest seemed to carry as bright a face as the most well-to-do. Mr. Myles Maguire, contractor and builder and rich man, could not help see-

ing this, though he would like to have shut both his eyes and his heart to it all. Myles remembered how a poor devil with whom he worked, ages ago, used to excite his sarcastic laughter by declaring that half-an-ounce of happiness was worth a waggonload of gold. And now here were many poor devils with nought but their bare hands between them and starvation, and the sun was on their faces and in their hearts ; yet here was he with his money-bags, and for five-and-twenty years he had not known how to smile ! Evidently these people were labouring under the delusion that money did not mean everything, and was not the aim and end of existence. Somewhere, there was something radically wrong, Myles Maguire confessed to himself.

At the Victor building on Twenty-third Street and Fourth Avenue, which sported the sign, " Myles Maguire, Contractor and Builder," the men had momentarily stopped work to shy cents and nickels, a couple of dimes, at a dirty Italian, who had been grinding a travesty on " Patrick's Day " out of his hand-organ, and who then, by way of thanks, gave them a representation of a wretch dying by slow tor-

ture, which, by a desperate stretch of imagination, they were supposed to fancy "The Wearin' of the Green"—and went on. Myles had remained half-a-block away till the agony was ended; and when he came up, he found that a hunchbacked old fellow, who was at work by the side-path, had stuck up a little ten-cent Irish flag on a barrel by his side. Myles stood looking from the man to the flag, and from the flag back to the man.

"That's a gay mornin', misther," the old fellow said, going on with his work.

After a little, Myles Maguire asked: "How long are you from Irelan', frien'?"

"Ah, throth too long. Nineteen years, come May."

"An' tell me, do ye iver think of Irelan' now?"

The old fellow looked up at him sideways for a moment. "Isn't it early in the mornin' ye're beginnin' yer larkin'?" he said then.

"Do ye ever expect to go back to Irelan'?"

"With God's help—with God's help." The old fellow sighed as he said it. "I mane to die in Irelan'. I was back there seven years ago this summer. If money

was plantier, it's few summers would miss me that I wouldn't be back. I have me wife an' childer there, that I've got to save for."

"I suppose ye send them money every year?"

"Every year! I struggle to sen' them, with God's help, a thrifle of money every month. When I'm in constant work I can well afford it. I earn big pay—ten dollars a week. We have two as brave sons as ever God bliss'd a father an' mother with, an' we're givin' them a good schoolin', an' shydrivin' to make somethin' respectable out iv them; we're puttin' wan iv them on for the clargy, an' the other's goin' to be a schoolmaster. An' when I help to pay for the livin' an' edication of them both—for the little patch of lan' wouldn't go far to keep them, let alone edicate them—I can't afford to go back to oul' Irelan' often. Another few years' hard work, an' me sons 'ill take me over, an' meself an' the oul' woman 'ill niver know want or woe afther."

Myles Maguire was reflective for some time.

"Are ye goin' to the parade to-day?" he said.

"Och, sweet good luck to the conthrac-tor, no! Bad wind to him! An' he's an Irishman too, they say. His name's Irish enough. But the heart in him—if he's got the like at all, at all, which I misdoubt—must be black. Sarra saize him! If a tinth of bad prayers the men has been prayin' on him these two days be heerd, I wouldn't like to be in his boots. A niggard he is, an' he'll niver be anything else." Mr. Maguire was feeling slightly uncomfortable. "May Sent Pathrick chalk it upon the cross-bar iv heaven's gates, to stare the villain in his face, an' turn him away, if he has the impudence to thravel tor'st them afther he give his last gasp. No, I'm not goin'; an' that's the second time only that I've missed the parade in the nineteen years I'm in Ameriky."

A mischievous American scamp snatched with him the little flag, and went hastily on his way down Fourth Avenue. The old fellow was stooped, and had his back turned. Myles Maguire, observing the thing, was swaying between two impulses—but the hunched back, the grey hair, the patient industry of the poor old soul, and a something else which he did not recog-

nise, curiously appealed to him who for seven-and-thirty years had kept his heart free from all such weaknesses. He started at a run after the miscreant. The latter doubled around into Twenty-second Street. But Myles Maguire was so close upon him that he was induced to drop the little flag on the path. Myles followed a bit farther, for a novel feeling of righteous indignation was upon him, and now felt even more eagerly desirous of kicking this fellow than the be-shamrocked conductor. But the fellow was too fast for him, and laughed back over his shoulder at Myles, who then turned and picked up the flag. He was holding it in his hand, and gazing at it in an abstracted fashion, when an astounding and very forceful box on he ear, making him drop the little flag from his grasp, drove him dazed and staggering on to the street, where he just escaped being run down by a cab, but did not escape cabby's lavish and whole-hearted abuse.

“Ho-o-o ! ye scoundhrell ye ! ye thought yerself purty smart, didn’t ye ?” his old hunchbacked friend was shouting back at him, shaking his fist, in which he bore off again the flag. “Ho-o-o ! ye oul’ vagabone ! who’d have thought ye had so much

scoundhrellism in ye? Ho-o-o ! but I'd like to bleach ye if I had the time, and wasn't loath to durty me hands on ye! Ho-o-o!" and he disappeared into Fourth Avenue, leaving Myles Maguire still standing on the street, rubbing the side of his head, and trying to arrange his dazed wits.

When he got them fairly arranged, he strode back to the Victor building, boiling with wrath.

The old man had planted his little flag again, and was proceeding with his work, but he saw Myles Maguire coming. He straightened himself up instantly, rolled back his sleeves, fell into fighting posture, and defiantly yelled, "Come on, oul' Belzybubb!"

"Sir!" shouted Patrick Aloysius O'Rourke, who, by good luck, was now on the ground, "what do ye mean?"

"I mane to whang seven divils out o' that oul' curmudgeon, who's afther thryin' to make a hare iv me, an' stale me flag intil the bargain. Only I caught the waf' iv his tails disappearin' roun' the corner, he was gone with it."

"Hish! that's Mr. Maguire, the contractor for the Victor."

"I don't care a brass fardin' if he was

Sent Pether himself, an' contrahactin' for purgatory. I wouldn't stand the same thraitment at his hands," and he looked the contractor defiantly in the eye as he proclaimed this.

Myles Maguire's wrath evaporated—even to his own astonishment. Determined to be astoundingly generous, he deigned even to explain. He told how the thing really did happen.

"Luke here now," said the old fellow, when he had heard him out, "ye don't mend matthers at all, at all, be lyin' over it. I circumvanted ye, an' we are as we stud at the beginnin'. I forgive ye, but nivir thry the same thrick again on me. Good-mornin', an' good luck to ye now. Since ye won't help me with my work, don't hindher me."

As Myles Maguire sneaked into the building with Patrick Aloysius O'Rourke, he felt that abject smallness which falls upon a man who has been discovered in a very mean act.

III

WHEN Mr. Maguire informed Mr. O'Rourke that, on second consideration,

he had decided that the men on the Victor building should have a half-holiday, Mr. O'Rourke was only slightly surprised. But when he got down to 271 Broadway, and there notified the patient and faithful Johnnie Gavigan that *he* should have a half-holiday, Johnnie was startled.

"Gavigan, what time does that parade start, and where from?"

"It starts," said the bewildered, elated Johnnie, "at 2.30 from Madison Square."

"Hum! Well, good mornin', Gavigan, an' a pleasant day to ye."

Johnnie went off in a half-dazed way. "There's something either wrong with me or with Misther Maguire," Johnnie said to himself—"an' I'm afeerd it's with Misther Maguire."

And when, three hours after, Johnnie, in one of the few lucid intervals he had on horseback (for the honour of riding a horse once a year far exceeded the pleasure in poor Johnnie's case), noticed on the fringe of the procession Myles Maguire decorated with a great green sash, Johnnie only just escaped losing altogether his normally elusive seat.

Yes, Myles Maguire, contractor and builder, for the first time in his thirty-seven

years' sojourn in America, had come to join in this procession of "out-of-works, lazy divils, and tom-fools." He had tried to drop casually into the ranks at the first convenient opportunity, but a mounted marshal ordered him "back to the divil out iv that, an' join yer own section. When Myles Maguire looked at the marshal, he discovered in him the hunch-backed old fellow, his own workman, who had that morning generously forgiven him for a mean trick of which he had not been guilty.

Myles melted away backwards. He tried to impose himself upon several succeeding sections, but with equal ill-luck each time. At the tail of the parade only he found welcome—amongst a band of irregulars.

The welcoming shouts and cheers that greeted them along the route, the handkerchiefs and the flags waved to them from window and housetop, every man in the long procession took personally to himself, and waxed proud over, and strutted. Before he had covered a score of blocks Myles Maguire was the vainest man, and had the most imposing strut of all that vast procession; and to the awkward-

limbed lengthy fellow who processhed on his left, he proudly imparted the intelligence that this was "a big day for oul' Irelan'." The big fellow's reply—rather a remark to himself—"I wish to the Lord they could see us in Meenticor," discovered to Myles that he walked with one from his own parish. Both, to their delight, soon found that they were old comrades and schoolfellows. "Myles Maguire," said Long Jamie Haraghey, "I've got in me pocket here a pint of potteen that was brewed on the backside of Knocknagher. When we get to the picnic grounds we'll have a jolly good slug for oul' times' sake."

And in Morningside Park, where they picnicked, Myles and Long Jamie tasted the potteen, and transported themselves again to Tyrone. For more than thirty years Myles had wasted very little thought, and certainly less speeh, upon Tyrone, yet it was surprising how freshly and vividly old times, old friends, old scenes crowded his memory and made his tongue glib.

"An' the Masther, too," said Long Jamie; "ye mind the times we had with Masther Muldoon of Pulvainey — eh, Myles?"

"Faith an' I do," said Myles, smiling a reflective smile. "Do you mind the day Micky Meehan made him sit down on his casthor?"

"Ha! ha! I do—I do! That was a hard day. An' do you mind the day we tied him to the stanchion in the school-gavel? Another wild day."

"I mind that. An' I mind the day he made you mount me on your back till he'd flog me for br'akin' in Donal O'Donell's dure."

"I mind that, Myles, as if it was yesterday. Beca'se I was so long, he thought he'd make me useful in some way. He called me his assistant taicher, beca'se on my back he flogged larnin' and manners intil yez. An' do you mind, Myles, the day you an' me fought an' malavoqued other at the Lazy Bush, beca'se I sayed your mother counted the praties when she was puttin' them in the pot?"

"Ha! ha! ha! Upon my soul, I do that, Jamie. What a throuncin' match it was! I alway thought meself a purty boxer; but that day, Jamie, you went within an ace of knockin' the consait out i' me. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Within an ace iv knockin' the consait

out i' ye? But, Myles, don't ye mind I *did* knock the consait clane out i' ye? Ye mind how I doubled ye over the stone-ditch, an' pounded ye till ye called 'Marcy!?'?"

"But beggin' yer pardon, Jamie, yer mim'ry's *slightly* at fault. You mind it was *me* that doubled *you* over the ditch, an' ludhered ye till *you* shouted 'Marcy!?'?"

"Myles Maguire," said Jamie feelingly, "I'm ashamed i' ye."

"Long Jamie Haraghey," Myles said, "nobbut *I*'m heartily ashamed i' *you*."

"I'm sorry indeed that ye force it out i' me—but, Misther Maguire, I must say ye're a liar."

"Misther Haraghey," said Mr. Maguire, "I'm very sorry indeed to say it—but you're a notorious liar."

"I see no other way out iv it," said Mr. Haraghey, "than to go into the grove beyont an' settle it."

"Done!" said Mr. Maguire.

In the silence and obscurity of the grove both doffed coat and vest, tied their suspenders round their waists, and rolled up their sleeves, just as they had done forty

years before, under the Lazy Bush. They squared up at each other.

"Jamie," said Myles, "I don't like to strike ye in coul' blood. Please to aggrivate me."

"All right, Myles. Usedn't yer poor mother (God rest her!) count the praties when she'd be puttin' them in the pot?"

"Ye lie, ye scoundhrel!" yelled Myles venomously; and he emphasised the remark by a terrific blow on Long Jamie's stomach.

In an instant a hot and fierce encounter was in progress. Myles found he had not forgotten a certain set of the thumb-knuckle which digging into his antagonist used to deal damage in the after-school fights, and made him an object of admiration, respect, and even awe, amongst his comrades. On the other hand, Jamie made good use of the swinging sledge-hammer stroke that half a century ago he had cultivated and made a specialty. For five minutes they pitched into each other with hearty goodwill. They were once more boxing beneath the Lazy Bush, with encouraging comrades about them; and they did not care whether Masther Muldoon

saw them or not, for they were fighting for glory, and absorbed in the dream of it.

But Long Jamie Haraghey was not as young as he used to be, nor his wind as good. After five minutes he was puffing hard; and then a timely and happily placed punch of Myles', put in the neighbourhood of Jamie'sgastronomicmachinery, did him up. He sat down hurriedly, and when he could, he gasped out :

“ M-M-Myles—that’s—enou-nough ! ”

To tell the truth, Myles was not sorry. Still, he had a duty to perform.

“ Jamie,” said he, as he stood over his victim, “ did me poor mother count the praties goin’ intil the pot ? ”

“ She—didn’t—Myles.”

“ Jamie, who’s the liar—me or you ? ”

“ I’m the liar, Myles.”

“ An’, Jamie, who axed for ‘ marcy ’ that day under the Lazy Bush ? ”

This one gave poor Jamie lengthened pause.

“ I say again, Jamie, who ? ” Myles had the awe-inspiring knuckle scientifically set.

Jamie saw the knuckle, and he said :

“ It was me axed for ‘ marcy,’ Myles

—me." And he added soliloquisingly : " Though I'm rammed if I believe it."

" That's all right, Jamie ; give us a grip of yer fist. So long as ye give in to the truth, ye're free to believe what plaises ye."

They shook hands heartily. Myles helped up his fallen friend. Each helped to dress and smooth out the other ; and then they went back to the picnic-party, spent a most jovial evening ; and went home mellow both, and happy.

To young Donoch McAteer, of Corr-clamp Upper, Meenadhring P.O., County of Tyrone, and Ireland, Johnnie Gavigan, next day, addressed a letter containing a respectable cheque, and a promise to pay all charges incurred in polishing a priest out of the aforesaid Donoch. " I have been forgetful in the past," the letter said, " but for the time to come, please God, your poor mother will not find me so. I am going home this summer to find if Knocknagher hill flames as yellow with whim-flowers as it used to do, and if the trouts are as plenty as ever in the burn at the back of Phelim McGinley's garden (God rest him !)."

At many subsequent Patrick's Day

parades, Myles Maguire, in the saddle (sometimes), was a proud and conspicuous—if unsteady—figure.

Myles Maguire went home again and again for many summers, and his eyes filled one Corpus Christi that he sat in the old chapel and heard Father Donoch McAteer of the black head and handsome, thoughtful face read his first Mass—for him, Myles Maguire. And when he turned to look at his sister Ellen, her bowed head and frame were trembling as she sobbed with joy: “Myles, I’m happy an’ content to die any time God calls me now. May the good God bless an’ reward you, me brother!”

“Whisht! arrah, whisht with ye, woman!” Myles said reprimandingly. But the big tears ran from his eyes, and sunk with Ellen’s into the sacred clay floor.

PATHRICK'S PROXY

AFTER a deal of peregrinating, Jamie Managhan, of Muintir, had pitched upon old Paudeen a-Mullin's daughter Rosie as a suitable wife for himself; and after driving the devil's own hard bargain with old Paudeen, he had got two springing cows, a bullockeen, bed and bedding, half a chest of linen, and forty-seven pounds in dry cash settled upon her. And the wedding was to come off on the Thursday before Shrove. Jamie was mightily pleased with himself; for not alone had he got a greater dowry than he expected, but—what was to him almost equally pleasing—he considered he had overreached Paudeen a-Mullin, getting out of him seven pounds and a bullockeen over and above the most that Paudeen had intended to bestow upon Rosie; for Jamie Managhan seemed to live for the purpose of overreaching his simpler neighbours.

To Jamie came Pathrick MacCalliog (whose farm marched his) some days be-

fore Jamie's wedding day, and taking him out and around to the gable of the house, imparted to him nervously that he, too, wished to take a wife unto himself.

"Jamie," Pathrick said, "the notion iv marryin' this Shrovetide is strhong on me."

"Throth an' it's time for it," said Jamie —for Pathrick would never see forty. "Who is the wife to be?"

"That I don't know for sartin yet, Jamie. It's what I want to consult ye about. Shamus-a-Match, the beggarman, has brought me word iv a likely girl in Tyroo, wan Mary McShan, who has got eighty pounds iv a fortune—a laigacy left her be an aunt in Ameriky—an' five head o' cattle."

"Whew-ew-ew!" said Jamie Managhan. "Yer bread's baked, Patrick."

"Not yet, not yet. Ye know I niver could put the comether on a woman. I want you to coort her for me, Jamie, an' it isn't the first or twenty-first neighbourly turn I'll have to thank ye for."

"Don't mention it, Pathrick. I'll do that, an' welcome." But Jamie was heartily grieved that *he* hadn't heard of Mary McShan a couple of weeks earlier.

Now, Jamie an' Pathrick were not fair

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specimens of the Muintir boys, who courted for the girl's sake oftener than they did for the dowry's.

As Shrove was hurrying on, there was little time to be lost. So Shamus-a-Match was sent, a courier, to Tyroo to announce that Pathrick, with Jamie, was going up to court there next night. Shamus had instructions to give Mary McShan an' her people a glowing account of "the way Pathrick had on him"—which is to say, the worldly circumstances he was in—and Shamus's imagination was stimulated with a silver token. So that when Jamie, with the bottle of whisky in his pocket, led the blushing Pathrick into the McShan household and introduced him, on the night following, there was a bright fire, a clean hearth, an' a hearty welcome for them.

But before they did go into McShan's, Jamie took good care to call at a shebeen close by, an' have the items of the dowry indorsed. "An' now that we're sure iv that, Pathrick," he said, "we'll show the McShans we're not mane, by makin' no mention iv her fortune. We'll say we've come to see the girl, an' that if she plaises, it's all we want. I have found, Pathrick, it always pays to be generous, when ye

know ye're not losin'. Now," he added, "you coort the oul' couple, an' I'll put the comether on the daughter." And this plan of campaign was faithfully observed.

When they were seated at Harry McShan's hearth, Jamie Managhan requested of Mrs. McShan a glass, an' produced the big bottle, out of which he poured a drop, with which he stepped across to Mrs. McShan. "Here, oul' woman," he said, "wet yer whistle wi' this." And when she hesitated about taking it, Jamie encouraged her with, "Arrah, bad scran to ye, woman dear, an' throw it over without makin' faces at it." She drunk welcome an' health to the strangers, in a portion of the glass, and despite Jamie's emphatic protestations, returned the remainder. Jamie supplemented this, and gave it to Harry McShan, and next offered it to the bashful Mary, who put it to her lips out of compliment to the company, and returned it. "Pathrick," said Jamie, "throw over this yerself, to put heart in ye. We're here on *business* the night," he remarked to Mrs. McShan. And Mrs. McShan replied: "Well, yez is welcome—yez is welcome." Finally, Jamie poured out a generous glass

for himself, and, still standing in the centre of the fireside group, made an appropriate little speech expressive of the genuine delight it gave him to find himself in such a clane an' daicint house, an' in the midst of such daicint, nice people, than whom he'd fare far an' thravel long afore he'd meet with daicinter or nicer ; then nodded an' wished a very good health to each in turn, an' threw off the glass at a gulp. He put the cork in the bottle, an' laid it, with the glass, on the dresser, and then resumed his seat. Pathrick MacCalliog was bursting with pride for him.

Harry McShan, having lit the pipe, tendered it to him. "Have a dhraw," he said. As he pulled, he remarked: "Pathrick MacCalliog an' me have come here on *business* (as I sayed afore) the night."

"Ah!" said Harry McShan, a remark that was non-committing.

Mary McShan, as she carded wool, turned her face farther from the fire till the shade fell on it.

"Pathrick MacCalliog is in notions iv marryin', an' takin' in a woman," Jamie proceeded.

After giving Harry and his wife time to look all over the blushing Pathrick, and

to express their approval by saying, in chorus, "Well, that's no harm," Jamie went on again: "Pathrick, wantin' a good, sensible, studly girl, an' a girl at the same time that he wouldn't be ashamed to be seen with on a Sunday, inquired, an' heerd tell of your daughter, Mary McShan." And then Jamie diplomatically paused again to feel his ground.

Harry McShan and his good woman brought Pathrick under inspection again, this time more searchingly than before.

"Hum!" said Harry, when he had satisfied himself.

Mrs. McShan resumed her work—imposing a large patch on a pair of Harry's old breeches, on a place where first a patch is requisitioned. Mary McShan got her face into a deep shade, and carded at an impetuous rate.

Harry McShan was the devil of a badger to draw, Jamie Managhan acknowledged to himself, and he must yield him another inch.

"So," said Jamie, "we've come to see the girl—an' you, sir."

Harry deliberately crossed his legs, and crossed his arms.

"What way has Pathrick MacCalliog on him?" he said point-blank.

"Come, Pathrick, spaik up for yerself," said Jamie. "Pull over here an' sit beside Misther McShan" (it was a policy of Jamie's to *Mister* anyone from whom concessions were wished), "an' I'll say a word to Mary. Misther McShan, you'll find me frien' Pathrick both warm an' well-to-do, a snug farm, a nate house, an' a good way on him for a wife. The girl that sits down in Pathrick's 'll find she hasn't made a mistake. Sit here, Pathrick."

When Jamie got beside Mary, he took hold of the wool-cards, with which she was industriously working. "Mary a gradh," said he, "let me have a hoult iv them for a little; it's sstrainin' yer purty eyes ye are, bendar' over them so long." And Jamie began carding like an experienced hand.

"Now, Mary," said he, "don't ye think ye'd like to be cardin' in yer own house, for yer own man?"

"Get away with ye!"

"An' let Pathrick back intil this place again? Very well an' good."

"Sit down with ye! Sit down, I say!" and she pulled him into his seat again.

"I axed ye, then, Mary, isn't it time ye wor thinkin' iv marryin'?"

"Ah," composedly, "there isn't any mighty hurry on me."

"Don't tell me, Mary—to a sprightly young girl like ye, a man is no mad dog."

"That depends," sighed Mary.

"I know well it does; but it isn't in every ditch-sheugh nowadays ye'll pick up a brave man with a good sittin'-down."

"Like—"

"Like me frien' Pathrick, beyont."

Mary eyed Pathrick critically, as if, far from stealing furtive glances at him since he had come in, she now looked at him for the first time.

"Well?" said Jamie, when she had completed the inspection.

"If he was in Spain he wouldn't be burnt for his beauty," she replied drily.

So true was this home-thrust that Jamie found enough ado to keep, in his friend's interest, a grave face.

"What way has he?" said Mary; for poor Mary had been raised up by a worldly father and mother.

"Come closer," said Jamie. And Mary hitched her stool till their two pair of

knees met, and their bent beads were only a few feet apart.

“ Pathrick has ten acres iv clay-land, an’ he has ten head iv cattle—four iv them milk-cows.”

“ What rent’s on him ? ”

“ Plenty, God knows. Five poun’ half-a-crown — an’ there’s always a heavy cut in Banajh. My farm matches Pathrick’s —but mine has the bottoms, an’ his is on the bank iv the hill. It keeps wan cartin’ manure to it, for it runs out as fast as it’s put on. Otherwise Pathrick’s farm is a good wan; barrin’ that he always has a poor crop i’ corn on it, an’ his meadow never comes to anything—a fine farm indeed, an’ grows as good aitin’ praties (mainly an’ floury) as any from here to there; only they’re generally small, an’ thin in the groun’, an’ a power iv rot among them — fine praties indeed, far better nor mine, though, iv course, I take two barrel i’ praties off my groun’ for the wan barrel poor Pathrick gets.”

“ Yours must be good lan’. What rent’s on ye ? ” Mary asked innocently.

“ Why, a thrifle iv fifteen shillin’ only, less nor Pathrick’s; though the parish gives in that, accordin’ to the qualities i’

the two lan's, I should, in justice, be payin' two poun's more."

"What about Pathrick's stock?"

"Pathrick has a gran' turn-out iv stock. He's able to keep on that farm iv his ten head iv cattle, as I sayed—which is within five head iv all I'm able to keep meself. Splendid milkers he has, too. I do believe his four head iv milkers gives, accordingly, near as much as my five. Iv course, poor Pathrick, owin' to the quality iv his grass, doesn't get butter off his milk at the same rate I do, though, sure enough, he makes remarkable butter—butter that goes in the market for only a penny a poun' less nor me own; an' it's a very few iv the farmers in our parts can chase me as close as that.

"Pathrick then has a good, studdy, responsible lump in a horse-baste that gets through considerable odds an' ends iv work, considherin' his age an' tediumness. Pathrick keeps the heart up in him; he gives him the wan-half iv his corn produce. An' when the baste desaives him, I've always made Pathrick welcome to wan i' mine—the gray coult. But Pathrick intends buyin' a good young horse—has been intendin' buyin' wan for these past

six years—when he has the cash to spare."

"When he has the cash to spare?"

"Yis, sartintly. Ye don't know Pathrick, the high-spirited fella he is. He'd scorn to take a loan. As often as there's fingers an' toes on me, I've sayed till him—as a neighbour should—'Now, Pathrick, if ye need the price iv a horse, fifteen poun', or twinty poun', or thirty poun', ye know I'm yer neighbour, an' ye'll offend me very sore entirely if ye pass meself an' take the loan off any other man. When ye want the money, don't be backward, say it to me an' I'll count nown the yalla boys intil yer han'.' But no! Pathrick 'ud go without a horse at all, at all, afore he'd take the loan off me. That's Pathrick for ye—a fine proud fella."

"Pride's a very fine thing. Pity it can't keep the heat in the hearthstone," said Mary drily. "An' that reminds me—how is Pathrick off for turf?"

"Turf?" said Jamie. "Ah, the divil a man in the parish 'ud have as fine a stack iv turf, or as big a wan, as Pathrick, if he'd only the turf-bank. He has a house that's both snug an' tidy; an' the only thing

it wants to keep it warm an' comfortable in the winter-time is the turf."

"An' hasn't he got a turf-bank?"

"Arrah, woman dear, no blame till him for what he cannot help. If Pathrick only had such a turf-bank as I have, there'd be few turf-stacks in the parish he wouldn't bait; he'd purty near have as good a turf-stack as meself."

"An' what sort iv fire can such a man keep in the winther?"

"Arrah, the norrah so badly off a woman 'ud be in the winther in Pathrick's. Breakin' bramble off the thorn-bushes, to help out the fire, 'ill always keep her warm enough."

"To the dickens with him for a man. Where is he comin' here lookin' for a woman?"

"Arrah, woman dear, houl' yer tongue. Every man wants a woman."

"Nor the half iv every man! There'd be some sense in the like i' you, now, comin' lookin' for a wife." And Mary here took the cards from Jamie, and began working them industriously.

"Eh?" said Jamie. "Is it me? But where would the likes i' me get a wife?" And Jamie sighed.

"Without goin' far," Mary said, with her eyes fixed intently on her work.

"I wish I knew where!" Jamie sighed again.

Mary was exasperated with such stupidity, so she said cuttingly:

"Wish in wan han', an' spit in the other, an' see which is the weightiest."

"Sure—sure, ye wouldn't have me yerself?" diffidently.

"Ye're not so sure iv that till ye ax."

"Will ye?"

"With a heart an' a half."

Mary got up from her work instantly, and going to the room, called down her father and mother.

"Jamie, how did ye do for me?" Pathrick whispered.

"Pathrick, the best I cud. She's very long-headed, an' hard to get around. But I have hopes, Pathrick—I have hopes."

After the lapse of half an hour, Jamie was called down to the room. And when he came up again, he motioned to Pathrick. Both bade the household good-night, and departed.

As they took the road homeward, Jamie broke gently to Pathrick—very, very gently—the news that his proposal had not been

received with favour. To Jamie's surprise Pathrick did not grieve as he should at this sad intelligence. And seeing this, Jamie ventured to add that Harry McShan had plumped a proposal at himself, and, taken by surprise, he had consented.

Pathrick only said, "Ah, indeed!" to this. And after a while: "Well, Jamie, I wish both in yez luck, an' all kinds iv prosperity" — which Jamie considered nothing short of magnanimous on Pathrick's part. And, "Let me tell ye, Pathrick," said Jamie, with enthusiasm, "I'm goin' to fit ye up in a wife. How would Rosie Mullin suit ye?" Pathrick only feared that such good luck could not be in store for him. "Pathrick, avic, afore this time the morra night," said Jamie, "I'm goin' to have Rosie promised ye."

And sure enough, on the night following, Jamie led Pathrick to Paudeen a-Mullin's, convinced Paudeen a-Mullin that he, Jamie, was the most unfortunate choice for a son-in-law in all the country-side, and at the same time pictured in such glowing colours the perfections of Pathrick, that Paudeen was proud and pleased to exchange, more especially as he

saved seven pounds off the dowry thereby ; and the wedding was fixed for the night originally agreed upon.

Jamie, too, acted as best man to Pathrick on the trying occasion ; and soon as the ordeal was over, lest Pathrick should entertain any shade of regret for what might have been, Jamie took him aside, whilst the boys kissed the bride, and comforted him with the assurance :

“ Ye’re now married on Rosie, Pathrick ; an’ next Chewsday night I’ll be married on Mary McShan, an’ let me tell ye that ye’ve got a long sight the best bargain iv the two.”

“ I know it, Jamie,” said Pathrick calmly — “ I know it. Afther ye’d gone up to the room to the McShan’s that night, to hear their decision, I was in a cowl’ sweat lest they’d consent.”

“ What ! For why, Pathrick ? ”

“ Beca’se,” said Pathrick, “ their sarvint-boy (he’s a near frien’ i’ me own, be his mother) put me on me guard that they’d got an Ameriky letter that very mornin’ with the bad news that Mary’s aunt’s will had been upset, so there wouldn’t come a three-ha’pence iv it to poor Mary.”

And it was so.

THE CADGER-BOY'S LAST JOURNEY¹

HIS poor mother, after blessing herself with the little brass cross upon her beads, arose from her knees and took again her customary seat by Hughie's bedside. Hughie, who had been lying in a state of obliviousness rather than asleep, had his faculties recalled even by the very little noise his mother's motion made. Her gaze was bent upon her lap, where her hands, still holding the beads, lay limply. For several minutes Hughie watched her, noting the weary and worn look which had asserted itself on her features.

“Mother!” Hughie said at length.

His mother started. “Hughie, *a leanbh*,² sure I thought it was sleepin' ye were. What is it ye want, *a theagair?*”³

“Mother, what time is it in the night?”

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² My child, pron. *a lanniv*.

³ My treasure, pron. *a haigur*.

"It's atween an hour an two hours afther midnight, son."

"Mother," Hughie said, "the heart o' ye is bruck with this weary sittin' up with me every night—"

"Arrah, Hughie, Hughie!" his mother said upbraidingly, "what is it ye're sayin'? Whisht with ye, for God's sake!"

"Och, I know it, mother—I know it. If ye hadn't a holy saint's patience, an' God's helpin' han', ye'd 'a' given in long ago."

"What's come over ye, Hughie, to be givin' such nonsense out of ye? Sure, it's not want to put pain on me ye do, is it?"

"What day i' the week's this, tell me, mother?"

"This? It's Friday night."

"Friday night. An' it was on a Monday evenin' I lay down. Mother, was it nine weeks or ten last Monday evenin'? I'm beginnin' to lose count i' the weeks lately meself."

"Och, I don't know, Hughie. Sure, that's all God's will, dear."

"I know it's God's will, mother—an' God's will be done. I b'leeve it's ten weeks; an' if it was His will that it should

be ten times ten weeks, *I* could bear the sickness. But then, the sickness i' the body is nothin'—nothin' at all—to the soreness i' the heart. An' it's *you* has to bear that. That's what puts worst on me, mother dear."

"Do ye want to put pain on me, Hughie?"

"Och, mother, don't be talkin' that way. Sure I know, an' I can't help knowin' the pains on ye. Ye're as brave a mother—there's no denyin'—as ever was; but let the bravest i' them come through all you come through for the ten weeks gone, an' suffer all you suffered, an' never for all that time sthretch themselves six times upon a bed—let the bravest i' the mothers do that, an' see what heart they'll have at the end of it."

"Och, Hughie, Hughie, *a mhic!*"¹ I can't stand ye at all, at all. You mane to br'ak me patience now, at any rate."

"No, mother, I don't. But if I didn't say much all the time I've been lyin' on me back here, I was thinkin'—thinkin' a great dale. An' when I go, mother—och, don't, mother! Mother dear, don't go for to cry like that or ye'll throuble me sore!"

¹ My son.

Sure ye know yerself I must go. Didn't Father Mick tell us both it was God's will, an' be reconciled to it? An' didn't you yourself give in that ye were reconciled to it? An' surely I have a good right to be if you are. Mother, when I go I'll have with me the knowledge of the brave woman ye were, an' of all ye sthrove with an' suffered, an' of how ye did yer seven bests to let no wan see the throubles the heart of ye was comin' through. I'll carry that knowledge to heaven with me, mother dear."

His mother could not answer him, for she was striving hard with the tide of grief which swelled in her bosom and struggled for outlet.

Little Hughie was to-night possessed by an exceptionally talkative mood.

"If ye sthruggle on, with God's help, mother, for another year, wee Donal, he'll be able an' sthrong an' wise enough then to go on the road."

Little Donal was then lying at Hughie's back, between him and the wall, and sleeping peacefully.

"Wee Donal 'll then be able to take the road with the powny an' cart; an' wee Donal 'll be as good a son, an' betther to ye, mother, than ever I was; though

I never kep' any money I could help, mother, barrin' (as I toul' ye the other night—an' as I confessed to Father Mick)—barrin' three ha'pence for tibacky, days I got good sale for the fish. But I couldn't do without the tibacky, mother, wanst I give myself the bad habit. Och, mother, if you would only know lonely nights that I'd be thravellin' *dhreich*¹ an' lonely roads, an' me, too, hungrier than I'd wish—if you would only know the comfort an' the company the tibacky was to me, I knew ye'd forgive me keepin' an odd wee three ha'pence for it. Now, wouldn't ye, mother?"

"Och, Hughie! Och, Hughie!"

"I just knew the kindly heart i' ye couldn't do else than forgive me. But I know, too, I should have always axed yer laive afore I started out on me journey—axed yer laive to let me buy the tibacky for meself. But ye always were so dead again' us smokin' that I was always the coward to ax ye.

"An' ay, many's the long an' many's the *dhreich* journey, mother, me an' the powny had with our wee cart i' fish. An', thank God, many's the pleasant journey, too—far, far more of that sort than of the

¹ Tedious.

dhreich wans. I mind me many's the lovely moonlight night when we thravelled along the white mountain road goin' through to Pettigo, or goin' up to Ennis-killen an' to Cavan. An' where they'd be miles an' miles of that road through the Pettigo mountains where there wasn't a horse or a house, or you wouldn't meet a sinner in broad day, let alone i' the night, I used not to have wan bit fear, mother. You always shook the holy wather on me when I had me cap lifted, blissin' meself afore I left the dure without; an' then, when that time i' night come that I thought yous was sayin' the Rosary here at home, an' I'd have got on me good lonely part i' the road, I'd take me cap in me han' an' I'd say me own wee prayers as me an' the powny jogged on, an' afther that I'd know no fear, no matther how-somiver lonesome it might be. An', och, mother, the lonesomeness, in the middle i' the mountains on a clear moonlight night had somethin' gran' about it."

"Hughie, *a thaisge*,' I hope ye're not distressin' yerself talkin'," his mother said, laying a gentle hand on his forehead.

"Oh, no, mother! Oh, no, mother! It

My store.

does me good to think over them things now, an' have you listenin' to me. But then, mother dear, maybe it's too tired to listen ye are?"

"Oh, no, Hughie; no, Hughie *a mhic*. Tell on—I'd never be tired listenin' to ye."

"Thanky, mother. Och, mother, many an' many's the beautiful journey I had with me wee cart i' fish, if I only begun to tell ye them, settin' off here afore night-fall, an' thravellin' all night, an' bein' in Sthrabane market or maybe Enniskillen market next day, an' sellin' out me wee load, an' maybe clearin' ten or twelve or maybe sometimes fifteen shillin's, an' then, afther a good rest an' a good harty male, not forgettin' poor Johnnie, startin' on thravellin' back for home the nixt night again, with me gains in me pocket—as happy as the son of a prence; an' havin' an odd wee sleep in the bed i' the cart, too."

"Och, Hughie, it was *gran'*, surely, an' no mistake."

"Ah, *gran'* was no name for it, mother! An' then, too, at the boats—when they came in, the men always give me such bargains, bekase of whose son I was."

"They did, *a mhic*. They did, Hughie, *a thaisge*. God bless them, an' reward them."

"God bless them over again, an' reward them, mother. They couldn't be kinder to me. An' I often thought it was betther, afther all, that ye wouldn't let me join a boat meself, mother."

"No, no, Hughie *a gradh*! No, I wouldn't. Not afther yer poor father, *a gradh*! No, no! God rest him!"

"God rest him, mother! God rest him! An' small wondher you wouldn't let wan belongin' to ye go upon the sae again. It's a cruel, thracherous sae, mother, God knows! Mother dear, don't cry. What's done can't be undone."

"Ay, ay, Hughie. Ay, a cruel, thracherous sae. But for all that, we can't say much about it, Hughie—we can't say much about it. Where would we, an' where would all our neighbours be, but for it?"

"That's right, mother; that's right! That's what I've always sayed when I heerd them complainin' again' it, that, like you, lost their nearest an' dearest be it. It's ill our comin'¹ to say a hard word again' the sae. Mother, open the dure."

¹ It ill becomes us.

"For what, *a leanbh*? Are you too warm, *a paisdin*?"¹

"No; but I want to see the sae, an' to hear it. There's a moon, isn't there?"

"Yis, Hughie dear; there's a moon, an' a bright wan, thank God," his mother said, going to the door and opening it wide.

"Mother, are ye too tired to rise me up a wee thrifle in the bed, an' let me head rest in yer lap, till I see out?"

"Tired? No, no, Hughie; no, no! Aisy, *a mhic*—gently now. Don't sthress yerself, *a paisdin mhili's*. There now, there now, lay yer head there. Now can ye see the sae away below thonder [yonder]?"

"Yis, yis, mother, thank God! I see it—I see it! The yalla moonlight baitin' down on it has it like flowin' goold. Oh, mother, it's beautiful!"

"It is beautiful, *a theagair*—beautiful!"

The Widow Cannon's house was far up on the Ardaghey hillside, and the sea out at Inver bar and beyond was plainly visible through the door from the corner in which was placed Hughie's bed. A muffled music, too, could be heard ascending from the bar.

¹ My little boy.

Hughie lay quietly gazing, gazing.

After a while two yawls were plainly seen far out darting athwart the yellow path which the moon laid along the waters.

"The boats," Hughie said, "are aff,¹ mother, the night."

"Yis, Hughie; they're aff."

Then Hughie again relapsed into silence, watching and thinking. A smile of sweet content, his mother saw with gladness, gradually grew upon his countenance and played about his glistening eyes. And presently, to the sweet murmur of the bar, his eyes closed, and he slept.

The Widow Cannon stirred not one little bit, lest she should disturb the poor boy's slumber—his first for many days and nights. But her lips began to move again in prayer, and a disengaged hand to tell the beads. Occasionally her eyes were turned up to heaven, but mostly they rested upon the now placid, smiling countenance of her poor boy, who slept on.

"Mother!"

"Yis, a *mhilis?*² Is it awake ye are?"

"Why, was it sleepin' I was, mother dear?"

¹ Off; *i.e.*, at the fishing grounds.

² My sweet.

"Ay, sleepin', *a mhic dhilis*. A sweet sleep."

"There ye are—an' I thinkin' I went through it all."

"What, darlin'? Was it dhraimin' ye were?"

"Ay, dhraimin' I suppose it must 'a' been. But I thought—mother!"

"What is it now, *a mhic*?"

"Who's callin'?"

"I hear no wan callin', Hughie dear."

"Listen! Don't ye hear? Hear to that! Who's that? What's that?"

"That? Oh, that's the bar, Hughie dear—that's only the bar ye hear."

"Is it the bar? Well, mother, as I was sayin', I thought I had got up an' fed Johnnie, an' then pulled out the rakin's i' the fire, an' made myself a ddrop i' tay in the porringer, an' then harnessed Johnnie, an' yocked him, an' away with the both of us away to the sthuran', to see if the boats was in. An' when we got to the sthuran' there wasn't a boat in yet, nor there wasn't a cadger come upon the sthuran' with powny or donkey. An' then I saw it was the moon was shinin' bright upon the wathers, makin' it look near like day. There was the big white sthuran'

sthretchin' from me to the right an' to the left, with niver another sowl on it but meself an' Johnnie, the powny. An' the Inver Warren over beyont me; an' the Fanaghan banks risin' up black behin' me; an' the full tide washin' in an' brakin' in wee ripples that had a dhreamy, sing-song sound at my feet. An' then, far, far away, away out on the wather, I could see the yawls an' the boats hard at the fishin'. An' all at wanst, mother, while I was lookin', what does I see but wan particular boat comin' glidin' in swift, straight along the sort of yalla river that the moon made from where the wathers an' the skies met, right up to my feet; in along this goolden river I sees the boat comin' faster an' faster, far faster than any of the boats ever does; an' it was comin' rowin' right up towards where I was. I seen there was a lady all in white in the bow i' the boat, an' when it come near she was standin' up an' callin' me with her finger. An' she looked iver such a beautiful lady, mother, when they come nearer still. An' when they did come nearer, into within wadin' distance, an' they turned the boat roun' so that they faced me, an' shipped their oars, I knew every wan was in the boat. An',

mother dear, who was it but me father was at the helm!—me father himself! An' James an' Patrick Magroarty was on the asther oars! an' Feargal McCue on the second bow! Just the very four, mother, that went down in me father's boat. An' Micky Dinnien, that got saved, his oar it was lyin' along the thafts, with no wan to pull it!

“ But the most curious part of the thing, mother, was that I wasn't wan bit surprised to see them. Lookin' at them there, I knew right well—minded right well—that they were dhrownded; but, all the same, I somehow thought they were still alive—ye know, mother, how dhraims does go that way?”

“ Yis, Hughie; yis, Hughie. O God rest their souls, Hughie!”

“ God rest them, mother! Well, as I sayed, when the boat come as far as to be near groundin', they swung her round, be Feargal McCue *shewin'* on his oar. An' then me father he rises from the helm, an' he says, ‘Hughie,’ says he, ‘we're short of a han' since we lost Micky Dinnien’ (him was saved, mind you, mother)—‘short of a han’, says he, ‘since we lost Micky Dinnien, an’—mother, do ye hear?’

"What! what! *a stoir mo chroidhe?*"¹
What is it?"

"Who's that callin', mother? Listen!
Now—hear it now!"

"Hughie, Hughie, *a thaisge*, that's the
bar ye hear again. The noise is risin' an'
fallin', as ye know it always does. That's
the bar, *a paisdin*."

"Is it the bar, mother? It sounds to me
very like some wan callin'—very. Well,
mother, as I was tellin' ye, me father he
says, 'We're short of a han' since we lost
Micky Dinnien, and we can come but poor
speed on the fishing grounds. We seen
you, Hughie, come down with the powny
to the sthran' an' we rowed in, to take
ye aboard. Will ye step in like a good
chile, Hughie, and pull on the bow oar for
us?' But I minded, mother, how you
promised, an' made me promise, I'd never
take to the fishin' afther what happened;
so I had to refuse him. 'Father,' says I,
'I'd like to do as ye ax me, an' take the
bow oar, but I can't—I can't. Ye knows,'
says I, 'how me poor mother's so dead
again' my ever goin' in wan i' the boats;
and ye know her poor oul' heart it's nigh
bruck already; an' I'll never have it sayed

¹ Store of my heart.

that *I* was the manes of br'akin' it out an' out.' 'An' God bliss ye, me son, for mindin' yer poor mother's wishes so,' says me father back again. An' with that, mother, who should appear but yourself up on the bank above me, an' ye called down to me: 'Go with yer father, Hughie, —go with yer poor father.' I was ever so glad when I got your laive to go, for I was burning to go. I threw my arms roun' Johnnie's neck, an' I called to ye, 'Mother, come you down an' take Johnnie home, an' don't forget him while me an' me father's aff.' The white lady she was standin' up in the bow of the boat now, and she was wavin' her hands to me to come. 'Come, Hughie,' she calls; 'come, wee Hughie! the tide's laivin', and we'll get shtanded when we should be on the fishin' grounds.' I waded into the wather immediately an' out to the boat—an' I was just almost beside the boat—within a step of it or two, an' the beautiful white lady had her hands shtretched out to give me a help in over the bows, an' I was shtretchin' out my hands tor'st her, when there comes a smooth swell that shook an' staggered me where I stood, an' I thought I'd 'a' fallen backwards—but the white lady

at that sthretched out further to help me,
when I wakened!

“ Mother, wasn’t that or not a wondher-
ful dhraim ? ”

“ Yis ; wondherful it was, Hughie—
mighty wondherful, me poor fella. It was
a very sthrange, oncommon dhraim. An’
Micky Dinnien’s oar, too, was idle ! And
they sayin’ they’d lost Micky ! ”

“ That was the very thing, mother, I
thought strangest of all.”

“ Hughie, we’ll say a Pather-an’-Avvy
for the rest of yer father’s sowl, an’ the
sowls of the crew.”

“ Yis, mother, do.”

Then the widow slowly intoned the “ Our
Father,” and Hughie took it up fervently at
“ Give us this day,” and the widow poured
forth her soul in the “ Hail, Mary ! full
of grace,” while poor, wasted, emaciated
Hughie clasped his hands, and with
streaming eyes strenuously pleaded a
“ Holy Mary, Mother of God ” ; and both
then chorused joyously a “ *Glory be to the
Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy
Ghost. Amen.* ”

“ Mother,” said Hughie, “ I’ll sleep.”

“ Sleep then, *a chuisle mo chroidhe*,¹ sleep.

¹ Pulse of my heart.

Thank God!" said his mother.

And ere she had finished the sentence Hughie's eyes had closed, and he was again asleep. She still held in her lap his head, as she had done now for upwards of two hours. She bent down and left a light kiss on his pale brow.

"Mother, is that you there?"

"Yis, Hughie, *a leanbh*. Are ye aisy?"

"Mother, what are ye doin' there? Who's callin', mother?"

"I'm only aisin' yer head, Hughie, holdin' it up—an' restin' meself sittin' here. There's no wan callin', Hughie. That's the bar, ye hear."

"Oh, but there's some wan callin'—callin' me, mother. Listen to it!" Hughie's voice was very low.

"Hughie, *a mhilis*, no. It's the bar. Sure yer own mother knows."

"Is it near mornin', mother? What time is it?"

"It's near mornin', Hughie. The first sthreaks is on the sky."

"The first sthreaks on the sky, an' me lyin' here! an' the boats in! Mother, what day's this? What's come over me,

anyhow, that I've lost the memory o' what day it is?"

"This is Monday mornin', Hughie, *a thaisge*."

"An' the morra's market-day in Enniskillen—isn't it, mother?"

"I suppose so, Hughie; I suppose so. But, *a thaisge*, don't, don't be distressin' yerself about them things!"

"Och, mother, mother, it's not here I should be lyin' at this time in the mornin'—an' I havin' to go buy me load yet, an' be as far as Pettigo afore nightfall, an' be goin' up Enniskillen sthreet with the first light the morra mornin'. Mother, mother, let me up. Put me on a dhrap i' tay, an' butter me a bit of oat-cake, an' I'll give a grain i' corn to poor Johnnie. Mother, why don't ye let me up, I say? The boats is in two hours ago. Look out. There isn't a sign i' wan of them on the wather!"

"Whist, whist! Oh, Hughie, *a thaisge*, whisht, an' lie quiet. Don't ye know, *a gradh*, ye're *far through* with the sickness? Oh, Hughie, *a paisdin*, whisht, whisht with ye!"

"Mother, I must be on the market pavement of Enniskillen this time the morra mornin'. Mother, why will ye hould me,

an' you hearin' them callin'? Don't ye hear, mother? Don't ye hear? 'Hughie! Hughie! Hughie!' Don't ye hear them, mother?"

"Och, Hughie i' me heart, lie down quiet. Or what's comin' over ye, Hughie? No, no, Hughie! ye mustn't, ye can't go for to rise, *a leanbh*!"

"Hear to them, mother! Hear to them! 'Hughie! Hughie! Hughie!' Don't ye hear? Ay! ay! Och, call you from the dure for me, mother—call you, mother dear, for my voice 'll not let me call loud; whatever's come on it. Call 'Ay!' mother, an' tell them I'm comin' as soon as poor Johnnie's fed."

"Yis, Hughie *a thaisge*, yis. If you lie quiet I'll call on them."

"Mother, what do ye mane? Lie quiet! an' the boats in!—an' the light on the sky—an' me havin' to be goin' up Enniskillen sthreet this time the morra mornin', mother!—forty long mile, an' a tiresome journey for poor Johnnie. It's a long journey, mother, but—I—must—"

His poor mother had to force Hughie back upon the bed. It didn't take much force, indeed. Then he became quiet suddenly. The look of anxiety and unrest

slowly passed from his features. His two hands closed in a faster clasp upon one hand of his mother's, which in the struggle he had caught. A smile of sweet peace settled upon his white, wasted face, and the cadger-boy started upon his last journey.

THE BOYNE WATER

FOR six months William and Liz'anne got on agreeably as well as comfortably. William was a weaver, and famed for good workmanship. And Liz'anne was as good, as tidy, and as clean a housekeeper as any of the most religious women at the Bocht. When she had her house trussed up for the day, and she had sat down in the front window to her sprigging, while William worked the loom close by the back window, and two spotlessly white cats—for Liz'anne was fond of cats, and always kept big ones—sitting on their haunches on either side of the swept hearth dreamily dropped their eyelids, and purred at each other across the fire, it was a pleasure to go into William's and have a chair, and be soothed with the comfort that filled the cabin. For six months, William and Liz'anne kept their religious opinions under due restraint, and their happy content was uninterrupted. There was no danger of dispute about going to

church or chapel, for neither of the pair had any decided *penchant* for visiting either.

Now William was not a drinking man in the usual acceptation of the term ; he had no craving for drink, but he seemed to feel that he owed himself and society the duty of getting gloriously drunk two or three times a year. And when William got drunk, his religious enthusiasm came uppermost, all the religious sentiment that had accumulated in his soul since he was previously on the spree suddenly began to boil, and William, quite indifferent to the religious susceptibilities of neighbours of a different way of thinking, threw open the safety-valve, when any who didn't choose to get out of the way were welcome to their scalding. William was now rampantly and aggressively Catholic, eager to let his blood colour the sod in the cause of his beloved Faith. His antithesis was Orange Watty—a weaver likewise—who lived under Dhrimanerry hill, not far distant. And hither, when the religious outburst seized him, was William wont to betake himself, creating a hostile demonstration in front of poor Watty Farrell's : " Whoop ! hurroo ! To — with King William, an' God bless the Pope ! "

Watty Farrell was spare and small of

frame ; he had a short temper, and was an ardent, fiery Orangeman, who gloried in being standard-bearer on "the Great Twelfth," and defiantly flaunted the flag in the face of the exasperated enemy—although, "the Twelfth" being past, and no other burning religious feeling being in the air, his Catholic neighbours had not a more cordial or a more esteemed friend than Orange Watty. Let Watty, though, be in what frame of mind he might, the instant he heard William Scott's defiant voice raised without, blaspheming his idol, and invoking a blessing on Anti-Christ, he bounded from his loom, all the Orange valour within him surging through his blood, and insignificant as he was in size, it always gave his big burly sister Bella enough ado to hold in her clasp his squirming form, until by some means or other she had got the door barred and bolted, and the danger of little Watty going out to commithomicide thus considerably lessened. And when William, waxing yet more insolent, sang loudly :

"Wor ye iver in Glenties fair ?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
Wor ye iver in Glenties fair ?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
Wor ye iver in Glenties fair,
Where (HURROO !) they clip the Orange mare,
And make stockin's of her hair ?
Says the Shan Van Vocht,"

Watty, like a caged tiger, screamed and raged within—and felt anything but soothed when William added him a good stomachful of personal abuse ere he left.

About six months after his marriage with Liz'anne, William let himself out on one of these royal sprees, and went through his usual programme, including the customary visit to Watty's and outpouring of bile thereat. But, as the fates would have it, big Bella being from home, and so no restraint upon Watty, the little fellow had come out, and—for William was too drunk for defence—"hammered the papish sowl-case out of him"—so Watty eloquently described it after—and chased him for his life.

When William came home after his ignominious defeat at the hands of such a miserable little *droich* as Orange Watty, he was not in the sweetest temper—and the animus he bore King William was much intensified. He tried to steady himself in the middle of the floor, and to look the haughty papist to perfection. He fixed his gaze on Liz'anne, who, in the window-seat, sprigged away industriously—"To (hic) — with him, I say! To (hic) — with him! To (hic—hic) — with King Bi(hic)-Bil-hilly!" That was too much for Liz'anne's

militant Protestantism to tolerate. She got up instantly, and, to the utter consternation of the already well-abused William, seized a creepy-stool and whacked him out of his own house. "Now, to —— with yerself, an' the Pope, an' with every dhrity papish from Connaught to Guinealand! an' a necklace o' red-hot millstones roun' yer necks to keep yous there when yous are down!" And the justly indignant Liz'anne, casting a last contemptuous look at her poor, amazed husband where he sat on the street, vaguely feeling for his sores, slammed out and bolted the door. And when at length William felt collected enough to gather himself together, he stood a good while gazing at the inhospitable door, which coldly stared him back; then he shook his head with grievous meaning, and turning away, felt it very hard that, owning a house, and a comfortable one, he was compelled to go and petition the Bummadier (the village pensioner) for the favour of a night's lodgin'.

"Well, for the life o' me," on a day when polemics raged, William would say from his seat at the loom, "I can't tell for what did they curse me with the name they did! *William!* Och, to —— with it! Hard feedin'

to them, an' my left-handed blissin' be on them done it!"

"Ha! ha!" Liz'anne would sarcastically laugh, throwing back her head. "No more do I know why they give such a name to the lakes (like) o' ye. Hard feedin' to them, say I, an' conshumin' to them! and *my* left-handed blissin' be on them lakewise!"

Liz'anne was very bitter, and in debate had that sort of a triumphant crow with her which exasperates.

"It's a name for a jackass," William would angrily retort.

"If that's so, they fitted ye well. But I say it's Pathrick you should have been called—that's the proper name for a jackass."

"Houl' yer tongue, ye barge-ye!" And William would stamp his foot. "Ye varago ye, houl' yer tongue!—if ye can!" he would add tauntingly.

"Yis, Pathrick it should 'a' been," and Liz'anne would move calmly about her work, "for any jackass called other than Pathrick is miscalled."

"Sent Pathrick was a jintleman, ye targer ye! What you, or wan belongin' to ye, nivir was, nor nivir 'ill be. Don't dar' for to even a word again' Sent Pathrick!"

"Make yer min' aisy; I wouldn't soil me

spoon on him if I met him in the stirabout pot."

"Ha! ha! ha! Yous haven't got the lakes of him anyhow among yer haratics."

"Ha! ha! In throth, an' if I thought they suffered the lakes of him among them, I'd turn Turk the morra."

"Ho, ye natarnal vag ye! Ye would, would ye? Faith, an' the Thurks, if they knew ye as well as I do, would prefer yer room to yer company. An' didn't I tell ye hundreds o' times not for to go for to abuse Sent Pathrick—don't do it!"

"Then don't you be throwin' the dhirty spalpeen in my face."

"O Lord! O Lord!" poor William would exclaim in agony.

"The dhirty spalpeen, indeed!" Liz'anne would repeat, seeing the sore spot.

"Ye *will* dhrive me mad, woman! O Lord!"

"Hagh! ye've put that out o' me power—for it's long since ye went mad. I niver met that papish yet hadn't the mad touch in him. What did they disgrace the good an' holy name of King William puttin' it on you for, anyhow?"

"It's me was disgraced by gettin' it."

"Get out, ye papish beggar! Don't say it!"

"Hagh! ye Orange tar-maj-ent ye, I'm disgraced."

"Ha! ha! disgraced! The devil himself couldn't disgrace you—no more nor soot might disgrace a chimley-sweep."

"Ma'am, ye're goin' too far. Ye'd temp' the Pope."

"The Pope, *moryah*! To the devil with you an' the Pope. The Pope! Och, short daith to *him*! If I owned a pig I had any respect for, I wouldn't let *him* carry *broc* (refuse) to it."

"Oh, Lord! Lord! Will ye let the Holy Pope alone atself that's not intherfairin' with ye!"

"An' didn't I tell ye afore to keep yer ill company to yerself? If you don't want him abused, don't go for to be throwin' the vagabone in my face."

"Vagabone! The Holy Pope o' Rome! Marcy look down on us! Are ye not afeerd, woman? Are ye not thrimblin'?"

"Och, then, the devil a thrimble's ailin' me, I thank you."

"Vagabone! Vagabone! I'll tell ye what it is, me good woman, if, be hook or be crook, them words o' yours reached him, there'd be an ass's head on ye in five minutes' time!"

" Ha, ha, ha, ha ! An ass's head, indeed ! An' throth I'm afeerd there's too few of his own sort could spare the wan he'd give me. An ass's head ! Ha, ha, ha ! "

Poor William wasn't nimble-witted enough for the sarcastic Liz'anne. He never entered into argument with her that he, somehow or other, didn't come out second best, for she could, metaphorically, twist him around her finger and cast him over her shoulder with an ease that was gall to William's soul. To William's credit, be it said, no matter how much she enraged him, he never dreamt of physical force as a good argumentative agent.

Of course these theological disputes were not perpetual. Very far from that. A day or two of each month might be set apart for them ; during the remainder of the month, Liz'anne was a dutiful wife and William a loving husband, and to all appearance, whilst they consented to forget their religions, both enjoyed more happiness and content than could easily be expected of such unregenerate ones.

When a young generation of Scotts were growing up, additional causes of disagreement entered into the lives of William and Liz'anne. There might, indeed, have arisen

serious difference of opinion over the baptizing of the children, only that William, who, when he saw a material advantage could be thereby gained, was possessed of a share of policy, and taking the easy way of Liz'anne—the *only* way in which she could be thwarted—had them christened as he desired. True, on the occasion of her first, the Bocca Fadh¹ (with William's connivance) gave it a hurried private baptism—intending thus to have the foreway of Liz'anne, if with returning strength of body should come stubbornness of mind. But the moment he had finished the snatch-ceremony in William's kitchen, it would be difficult to say whether his pain or his amazement was the greater at the stout blow that took him over the head, and set a squadron of stars doing intricate evolutions before his eyes, for Liz'anne, in her bed in the room, suspected something, and arriving on the scene robed in a manner not quite appropriate to the kitchen, and for which the exigency of the occasion was her excuse, had seized hold of Shan-a-Phiopa's (who had come to the christening) stick, laid on the Bocca Fadh with a precision and effectiveness of stroke very

Long Beggerman.

creditable indeed for a woman whom the conventionalities of society require to be hovering between death and life. Anyhow, on this occasion there was more of life than death dealing with Mistress Scott's arm and tongue, for she very quickly cleared the Bocca Fadh out of the house, loaded with a sore load of both physical and moral abuse—and the other trembling revellers who had assembled to enjoy the christening had gratitude in their hearts when she let them escape with a tongue-thrashing. The Bocca Fadh paraded his wounds around the parish, and made much capital from a humble comparison of himself with those good and renowned men of the early Church who were martyred in the same cause in which he had so sorely suffered.

But a time came, and the neighbours told William it was a shame that he wasn't sending the children out to chapel; and it forced itself on William that it was part of his duty, as a good Catholic, to do so. He wove for them some of his best tweeds, and John Burns carefully took the measure of the eldest, and making necessary allowances for variation in size, cut out the making of nice suits for all of them after this standard. Liz'anne found what was

going on ; she didn't say much, but began making little necessaries for them, also resolved they should go to church. As the day of the children's *début* approached, relations became strained, the tension gradually increased, and on the eventful morning both William and Liz'anne joined in dressing the children, vieing which should do most, and heartily abusing each other's religion all the time. But, alas ! William was faultlessly dressed himself and sporting his Sunday shoes, on which Liz'anne had, the night before, bestowed a magnificent polish—and so prepared to go *with* the children. Here he had poor Liz'anne, whose wardrobe—neat and clean and plentiful enough for house-wear—boasted no holiday garments. Eventually, when she had with infinite pains fitted the children up in their neatest, and saw that William stood by the door waiting to guard the flock into the proper fold, she lost at once her resolve and her temper ; she huddled the children out of the door, pitched poor William out on top of them. "Here, an' away to —— now, you an' them !" she said, and slammed the door.

But of their five children, Liz'anne won to her church the allegiance of four. The

fifth and eldest hoisted William's colours, and was very proud to proclaim himself "a jiggered papish." Religious disagreements were now no less rife. But William had long since tired of the monotony of being beaten, and had given up trying on such occasions to return Liz'anne word for word, and he schooled the son who had shown himself worthy of him to express his feelings rather by looks than words—though he himself still employed words. When occasionally a religious difference would now arise, William without any delay laid down what he styled the Boyne Wather, a shaft of alder-wood about twenty feet long, which from the hearth passed down the centre of the floor, dividing the house equally. When the Boyne Wather was laid down, it was a mutually understood and respected rule that Liz'anne and her following were to keep to the front half of the kitchen, while William and his small but staunch support kept the other half. Insulting words and looks flung across the Boyne Wather were, of course, quite within the rules of war, but on none but the most urgent account could either party trespass on hostile territory—whereby this Boyne Wather surpassed its original.

The waggish ones of the Bocht, who took a sinful delight in the religious controversies which troubled the lives of William and Liz'anne, were fond of quizzing the former when they got him at wake or other gathering where fun was the order.

"Well, William, is the Boyne Wather down or up this weather?" and the interrogator, with a twinkling eye, appealed to the humour of the house.

"Och, it's down, down," with a mournful shake of the head. "I had to fetch it from behind the house" (the customary resting-place of the Boyne Wather when peace reigned) "yesterday evenin', an glory be to goodness!" with a sigh, "it's down yet, an' small signs of thon woman lettin' me take it up."

When William had got the Boyne Wather safely laid, and got to his loom again amid a hail of abuse from Liz'anne, he wrought harder than was his wont, and he made the shuttle fly to an unending accompaniment of "No wondher! No wondher! No wondher! No wondher!" his sole and very exasperating reply now to Liz'anne's abusive arguments. As long as Liz'anne continued bestowing hurtful epithets on William and William's Church, so long

would William, in a doleful voice, continue the Jeremiad—"Nowondher! No wondher! No wondher!" thus stinging Liz'anne into protracting her unedifying discourse, which, by reaction, lengthened in turn William's mournful chant. And yet happen what domestic events might, or let who would come in or go out, whilst the Boyne Wather was down, and the fit on William, he went on with his loom and his plaint, the shuttle swinging to and fro, his head nodding to it in a mournful manner, and he proclaiming "No wondher! No wondher! No wondher! No wondher! No wondher!"

On a Twelfth of July William's second son, who had been honouring the occasion not wisely but too well, came swaggering up through the Bocht, eliciting from the echoes lusty cheers for the pious, glorious, and immortal King William, and right heartily and boisterously abusing all the enemies of the said William and of his Church. The William who had fallen away from the traditions of his name, to wit, the enthusiast's own father, heard him with deep mortification, and slunk in a convenient door till the son who shamed him had passed. He felt called upon to apologise for the conduct of his unworthy offspring; he shook his head dejectedly.

"I don't know how this is," poor William said, "for that boy comes of wan of the d—d best Catholic stocks in Dinnygal!"

The children of William and Liz'anne disappointed us all—pleasingly disappointed us—by the good turn-out they made, for we had ever had our forebodings about their future. They went to America one by one, prospered, and never forgot the old couple.

When the children had disappeared, the Boyne Wather began to be requisitioned less often. Very probably it had got to be laid down on Patrick's Day and the Twelfth of July—but William and Liz'anne would be more than human if this wasn't so. During the remainder of the year it lay behind the house in merited neglect. It was not that either had got any less zealous in their religion. William remained, what always he had been, one of the staunchest Catholics that never attended chapel—and Liz'anne, in like manner, and to the like extent, tendered unabated loyalty to her Church. But old Time had softened the asperities of both tongue and temper, and strengthened that regard for each other which, despite their disputes, William and Liz'anne had ever maintained. For years it had been a standing joke for the countryside how Watty

Farrell having once happened into William's when the Boyne Wather was down and the wordy artillery in full play across it, and having had the temerity to join Liz'anne in her abuse of William, Saint Patrick, and the Pope, Liz'anne had without more ado emptied a bucket of water over the audacious little weaver, and then emptied him, dripping, out of the house.

And when William got "the sthroke,"¹ and everyone thought him dying, Liz'anne, despite the bitter, sleety, awful night it was, dashed out, unshawled and unhooded, and off to Father Dan's at the top of her speed, and not finding Father Dan at home, ran again, breathless, four sore Irish miles to Corameenlusky, where he was attending Hughy Shan's old mother, and carried him off with her, to give to William the consolations of his religion. And William received these as hopefully as many a more regular Catholic.

William lingered for several weeks, and Liz'anne's concern and attentions were touching. For all that morning upon which he died, William kept repeating one word—"Liz'anne, Liz'anne, Liz'anne, Liz'anne," as unceasingly and persistently as he

¹ Paralysis.

had ever chanted "No wondher! No wondher! No wondher!" over his loom. It was the ravin' of death, they said, was on him. Despite the heart-whole prayers of the good old women of the Bocht, assembled in his room beseeching God to give him a happy and sudden release, William's dying moments were protracted. It was at length agreed that the presence of a heretic was the cause. The weeping Liz'anne, poor woman, agreeing with this opinion, quitted it, and, according to expectation, William soon closed his eyes in peace.

The Boyne Wather was laid down, for the last time, at William's wake—but this time across the hearth, making several very warm and cheery fires for the comfort of the wakers. They all knew its history, yet the boys who had so often made merry about it, joked not on the occasion.

CONDY SHEERAN'S COURТИ'

CONDY was a plodding, practical man. And Condy was a bachelor. Off and on for twenty years before, neighbours who had an interest in him—and neighbours who had an interest in their own daughters—had been advising Condy to take a wife unto him. “*Musha*, Condy Sheeran, what's goin' to happen to ye at all, at all—livin' there in that wee cabin yer *lee-alone*, with divil a sowl to look afther ye, or care for ye? Why but ye rouse yerself up, man alive! an' look out for a sthrapping young woman that'll put yer house to rights—an' yerself too ; an' make a new man o' ye. There ye're doiterin' an' doiterin', in of the house, an' out of the house, an' about the house, an' delvin' an' diggin' early an' late, summer an' winther, on yer wee farm, an' where yer comfort comes in is more nor I know. Yer house is in an uproar (disordered state) like the fair of Carmen ; an' wan would think the clothes on yer back was thrown at ye. Ye're

scratchin' an' scrapin', layin' by money for the sorra-only-knows-who to scatter. Rouse yerself, man alive ! There's girls on all sides of ye that the cheeks of them would be betther nor a fire in yer kitchen, an' they'd jump at the offer of bein' Missis Sheeran, if ye only sent them the word be a fiddler."

Condy, inwardly amused, ever patiently listened to the kind advice his good neighbours were so generous in bestowing on him. But his poor mother (God be merciful to her !) ere she died left Condy a legacy of proverbs that for years had given him pause. "Never you buy a pig in a poke, Condy *a thaisge*," his mother used to say, far from intending any disrespect to the young ladies of Dhrimholme ; "an' there's many a dashin' girl makes a poor, dhraggle-tailed woman." "Betther alone than in bad company, Condy," she would also say. And—a variation of this last—"A lonely hearth an' paice is betther nor the best woman in the wurrl' an' verrins" (variance).

Still, the more experience Condy had of the lonely hearth and peace, the more frequently would the question force itself on him: "But if I had a middlin' good woman an' no verrins?" And as he and

the cat sat by the hearth on a long winter's night, looking into each other's eyes, Condy, with the limited amount of imagination at his command, used often to picture a homely, sensible woman crooning a song round the house as she busied herself doing the *timirishes* (little necessary household matters), while he, with well-washed and well-patched clothes, lay back in his chair in the corner, and, watching her, puffed his little black pipe in cheerful contentment. And at length when, after mature deliberation, he considered he had reached years of discretion—he was then forty-five, having been born June was three years after *the dear summer*—he decided he might venture to trust his judgment in selecting one fitted to be a wife to his mother's son.

So on a night when he had a fine junt of fir blazing in the fire, and the cat blinking and purring at him across the hearth, and his black pipe working spasmodically and not uncomplainingly, Condy went painstakingly through the catalogue of eligible females in the parish. He first weeded out those that were too young: "A slip of a girl under thirty doesn't know her own mind," he said; "so I'll

have nothing to say to wan o' them." Then he rejected the crotchety, cranky ones, and all who were reputed possessors of any sort of ill-temper, and next the slatternly ones. "Me sawnies," Condy said to himself, "the list's gettin' mortal small ;" and so it was. And when, finally, he had also put aside all who were "too fond o' the sight of the black pandy (porringer) on the coals"—which was to say all who were too fond of tea—just one woman remained. She was Ellen McGroarty, of Throwerstown. Ellen was a daughter of Long Neil, and she had been the heiress of the McGroarty property, consisting of two acres of clayland and two miles of bog and heather—an extensive if not very remunerative estate ; besides pigs, cows, ducks, drakes, and other farm stock. Regarding Ellen's age, it need only be said that she, like Condy, had reached years of discretion.

Having settled one difficulty, another loomed upon Condy's horizon, and required another night's grave deliberation—How was he to ask the wife ?

"Of course"—and Condy seemed to direct his discourse to the cat—"I'm not used to this sort of business, niver bein' in

he habit of axin' weemen." (Condy didn't intend to be satirical at the cost of the young men of Dhrimholme, but unconsciously he was.) "An' I wish I had it well over me."

The etiquette of marriage proposals as observed in Dhrimholme was a mystery to Condy, who had never gone on such an expedition. If there had been an intended father-in-law in the case, Condy would have seen his way pretty clearly—even a mother-in-law might have been negotiated. But Ellen was, again like himself, *lee-alone*. Of course, Condy had heard over and over again the ridiculous way they settle those matters in the tale-books—two blessed idiots squeezing the breath out of one another, one gasping "Say, beloved star of my existence, will you be mine for ever?" and the other fool replying, "Ye-ye-yes—yes, for ever and ever!" But he didn't give this silly method a moment's thought. He also saw that he might lift the latch and walk in to Ellen with "God save all here; an' I want to know will ye *take* me, Ellen?" But little thought he gave that method. *How* he should do it was more than he knew; and he had half begun to consider whether, after all, the advantages

of having the best girl in the parish, with two acres of clayland and two miles of moorland, geese, pigs, and other farm stock to boot, would really outweigh the mental endeavour the asking of a wife would entail.

One thing, however, Condy did know ; and that was, when anyone went looking for a wife, a bottle of whisky was an indispensable factor. So, with a prayer in his heart and a bottle of whisky in his pocket, Condy, on a beautiful moonlight night, stepped over the moor to Ellen's. Ellen was carding wool in preparation for spinning as Condy, lifting the latch, thrust his head in at the door.

"God save ye, an' God bless the work !" he said.

"Save yerself kindly, an' thanky, Misther Sheeran," Ellen, a little surprised, said. She laid down the cards, and drawing forward a chair, wiped it with her apron and set it in front of the fire. "Come forrid, Misther Sheeran, an' take a glint o' the fire. *Illioga*, a thin, sharp night it is. My fire might be better, too, but, *musha*, it was a poor saison for thurf."

"Oh, thanky, thanky, Ellen," Condy .

said, settling for himself a seat right at the door, as if he anticipated having to make a clean run for it, and chose the readiest position. "I'll just do here."

"Arrah, bother! come up with yerself when I tell ye. *Musha*, but ye're warm on it. It would be enough a day the crows would be puttin' out their tongues to go an' to sit by that dure—it's about as shelthery as an iron gate. Come up with yerself when I tell ye!"

And as Condy took the proffered seat, Ellen's keen eye detected the neck of the bottle sticking out of Condy's pocket, and instantly a little light dawned on her.

So as soon as she had put more turf and fir on the fire, and tidied up the hearth, she seated herself, and began the carding again very industriously, all the time running over the litany of woes attendant upon looking after a farm and farm-labourers, and cattle, and ducks, and hens, and pigs,—to all which Condy listened very attentively, and spoke not.

When Ellen had exhausted the topic, having advertised her dowry to her content, she made a politic pause. But Condy remained silent likewise. She ven-

tured after a minute or two to steal a glance at him. He was putting his hand irresolutely into the pocket whence the bottle showed, and nervously drawing it back again. Ellen coughed ; which startled Condy.

“ Have ye—have ye—a—a egg-cup in the house ? ” he jerked out.

“ A egg-cup ? Yis, surely, Misther Sheeran,” with well-assumed surprise, and implying a politeness that forbade her to question her guest. “ Surely, Misther Sheeran, I’ve a egg-cup,” she repeated, as she fished for one behind the plates on the dresser.

“ I’ve—I’ve a small dhrap of nice whisky here,” Condy said, drawing forth the bottle, “ an’ I thought ye mightn’t object to helpin’ me with just a thimbleful.”

“ Well, thanky, an’ long life to ye, Misther Sheeran ; I can’t have the bad manners to refuse ye—but let it be only a thimbleful. Och, that’ll do, Misther Sheeran ! Aisy, aisy ! Faith, I’m afeared it’s the tailyer’s thimble—ha ! ha !—that ye measure with. No, no ! taste it yerself first. Och, the sorra a dhrap of it crosses me lips the night till ye dhrink the *crivan* [overflow] off it yerself. No, no, no ; it’s

no use—I'll not br'ak me word. Taste it yerself first, Misther Sheeran, an' laive me the dawniest little dhrop in the bottom."

Condy was sitting half-turned from the fire, holding the flowing egg-cup towards her, and Ellen stood facing him in a protesting attitude.

"I tell ye there's nothin' in it," he said. "It wouldn't dhrownd a bum-clock. *Musha*, woman, but ye're conthrairy! Take it, I tell ye, an' throw it over; all's in it wouldn't br'ak a pledge."

"An' I tell ye I won't, till ye dhrink at laist the two parts out of it. I'd be dhrunk if I took it, Condy Sheeran."

"Dhrunk, *moryah*! There isn't as much in it as would wet yer thrapple. Well, here goes," he said, giving up the argument in despair—"here goes, an' God bless us!"

"Amain!" Ellen fervently responded, "an' God bless us again."

"Ah, ye haven't taken as much out of it," Ellen said, as she took the egg-cup from Condy, who, with the sleeves of his coat, was wiping his mouth, and smacking his lips with satisfaction—"ye haven't taken as much out of it as I'd lift with three pins. Anyhow"—here she made a wry

face at it—"here's luck an' prosperity to ye, Misther Sheeran, an' again God bless us."

"Luck where it goes! Amain! an' thanky kindly," Condy said.

Ellen just tasted it, made another wry face; tasted it again, and coughed distressfully; finally gulped a sup of it, and, with a suggestion of agony expressed in the lines of her face, laid the egg-cup on the table.

"Take it all, I tell ye! Finish it."

"I can't, I tell ye! Agh, agh!"

"I tell ye, ye must finish it."

"An' I—agh, agh!—tell ye I won't. Now, take a sup yourself."

"Och, niver a ddrop till you throw off that eyeful there in the cup."

"Ye're aggeravatin'! I tell ye I can't. Show me that bottle." And taking bottle and egg-cup in her hands, she poured out for Condy a cupful with a *crivan* truly on it. "Now, dhrink that over."

"Well, it's you that's aggeravatin' now, woman," Condy said, as he carefully caught from her hand the overflowing cup. "Is it to dhrink that?" And he took the measure of it with a side squint.

"Ay, that—an' another if you say much. Toss it over, an' be quick about it."

"Och, then, aisy with ye, an' give me time. Here's 'May the devil niver see wan of us!'"

"Amain! amain!"

In a twinkling the egg-cup was empty.

Condy coughed as he handed it back to Ellen; and corking the bottle, he, according to custom, placed it on the dresser, thus resigning his ownership in the remainder.

Ellen again resumed her work, and Condy turned and gazed intently in the fire. She knew she had rid him of much of the distressing nervousness which troubled him before, and was now content to await developments.

"*Musha!* it's a cowl' night, Ellen," Condy said, as he spread his hands towards the blaze and shrugged his shoulders.

"Cowl', indeed," Ellen said.

"But a snug, warm little house ye have," carrying his eye round it.

"Yis, thanks be to God, warm enough, an' snug enough; but—but—"

"But what?"

"Och, just"—with a thoughtful sigh—"I manes to say, it's a bit—don't ye know?—lonesome."

Condy was at once convinced he was

dealing with a woman who knew her business.

"Lonesome?" said he. "Throth, I don't doubt ye. I have the same feel meself."

"Now, see that!" Ellen said, looking up at him with sympathy. "I'm jist sure ye feel lonesome in that barrack of a house, all to yerself."

"Divilish much so."

For a minute or two both remained in thought.

"I often think to meself," Ellen then said, "that it isn't right to be alone."

"Many's the time Sam Duncan, the great scripturian, tells me the same words out of the Bible."

"An' the Bible's right. For a man in purtikler, I don't know how he can live alone an' keep his temper, for all about him's going wrong."

"You're right there. But no more can a woman, especially if she has a farm an' stock to look afther; it's enough to br'ak any woman's heart."

"Do ye know, Misther Sheeran, ye have the makin's of a snug, warm little place of it there? An' it was only the other night —whetsomiver put ye intil me head?—I

was jist thinkin' of ye—thinkin' how comfortable an' happy ye'd be if ye had some sort of a woman-body to look afther ye."

"It's often," Condy said, slowly shaking his head at the fire—"it's often I've thought the identical same thought meself."

"Somewan of womankind," Ellen went on—"an aunt or frien' who'd take a kindly intherest in ye, an' tidy up yer house an' yerself"—here Ellen glanced at Condy's dilapidated garments; Condy also glanced down at them and sighed—"an' make things look like a home it would be a pleasure to come intil."

"Right ye are, in throth!" And Condy shook his head emphatically at the fir-blaze.

"We'll say it's a day coming on the winther now," Ellen, in poetising strain, went on, "an' ye have been out the lee-long day up to the knees in mud an' slush on the pratie-ridge an' in the pratie-sheugh, an' ye're comin' in dhirty, an' cowl', an' miserable, an' benumbed, an' the heat burstin' from the door, as ye open it, cheers the bones o' ye. There's a roarin' fire leapin' on the h'arth, an' over it hangs a pot of spuds laughin' through their jackets

at ye as ye come in. An' the h'arth's nate an' tidy, an' the house shinin' like a new pin; an' there's a clane-wiped chair in the corner, an' yer pipe an' tibacky in the h'arth-bole right beside. An' the cat curled up wan side the fire, an' the dog in the other, an' a woman—yer aunt or cousin—slitherin' roun' the house, doin' this turn, an' that wan an' the other, an' fillin' the wee kettle to have it boiled an' singin' on the fire, callin' on the grain o' tay for it to wet as soon as ye've filled the *farlands* with nice mealy spuds. Condyl Sheeran, I say again"—with the tone of one anticipating, but defying, contradiction—"I say again, it would be a comfort an' a delight to ye to have some clane, smart, and industrious woman - body about the house that would have yer happiness at heart; an' I say it would cheer the heart in ye many a day ye otherwise bring a cowl' heart intil a cowl' an' miserable kitchen."

Every point and every shade of the picture Ellen called up Condyl saw vividly in the blaze; and for a minute, with the delights of it, he was too overcome to express himself.

"Thru—thru—thru," he at length

said, slowly and convincedly ; "it's every word thru as gospel, Ellen McGroarty."

"A cousin, or an aunt, or a frien', then, ye should have," Ellen said, as she teased the wool with vigour.

"But that's just what I can't have. Barrin' me Aunt Mary that's married on Seumain Throwers of the Long Alt—and *she* can't come—I haven't a frien' in the wurrl' barrin' in Ameriky again ; an' them that goes till Ameriky," Condy went on thoughtfully, "'ill not in a hurry come back till Irelan' an' hardships for nothin' betther nor to keep house for a poor, good-for-nothin' divil of a lonesome bachelor like me."

Ellen, politically ignoring his plea of no friends, went on : "There's fifty things about a house a man can't do an' won't do."

"Can't do and won't do—exactly."

"An' the house, sooner or later, goes to rack an' ruin ; and he may then thank God if he doesn't go to rack himself."

"Thank God he may ; it's gospel thruth, Ellen McGroarty. But, as I sayed, I have neither aunt nor frien' of womankin'."

Ellen affected not to perceive the bait,

and went off on a new tack, where it would be Condyl's duty now to follow. "For a woman's part, now, it is a different matter," she said. "There's meself, now, an' I'm livin' alone goin' on four years (it'll be four years *again'* Oul' New Year's Eve, the 11th January, since me poor father—rest his soul!—died)—goin' on four years, an' I find I can manage bravely."

Condyl gulped. In a minute, with an almost pitiful appeal in his tones, he said: "Ah, but now, it's not the thing for a woman either, no more nor a man."

"Well, no; no, I suppose it's not altogether the thing," she said, conceding a strong point.

"No; it's no more right for a woman to be alone than for a man," Condyl said, feeling ground again.

"Well, I suppose, Misther Sheeran, when wan looks at it in *that* light"—*what* light Ellen meant wasn't exactly clear, for Condyl did not seem to throw any dazzlingly new light on the subject by the particular brilliancy of his argument—"when wan looks on it in *that* light, sartintly I suppose it isn't."

"Sartintly it isn't," Condyl said, with confidence; "it's mortal lonesome."

"Ay, lonesome it is," and Ellen shook her head at the wool she carded.

"An' there's fifty things about a farm a woman can't do an' won't do," Condy said, with ill-suppressed triumph, turning her own argument upon her.

"Well, yes," as one who was forced to acknowledge defeat.

"An' a man's a mighty handy article to have knockin' aroun' a house," said Condy.

"Yis, a man is; I give in to that."

"Ye don't know when, or for what ye need him."

"Thru for ye enough, Misther Sheeran."

"An' a woman's farm an' stock isn't cared for, or fed, or half looked afther—can't be—where there isn't a runt of a man."

"Indeed, an' there's no lie in that," Ellen acknowledged, with the tone of one on whom light was dawning.

"Then, Misther Sheeran," she resumed, laughingly looking up at him, "I suppose we'll have to give in wan of us is as bad off as the other?"

"That's just it," Condy said. "But"—after a slight pause—"it needn't be so."

"Well," Ellen said, with clever stupidity,

"I have sartintly been thinkin' of hiring a thorough good man—thinkin' of it for months back. A hired man is just the very thing I need."

"A hired man," Condé said, slightly losing heart again, "isn't, after all, the thing."

"Well, sartintly, Misther Sheeran, when wan looks on it in *that* light"—for the mysterious light once more opportunely manifested itself to Ellen—"a hired man isn't the thing either. Still, I'm thinkin', Misther Sheeran, I'd recommend you strongly to hire some good, steady, middlin' oul' woman; that's what you want when ye haven't any frien' of yer own to keep house for ye."

"No, I'll not hire a woman. The fact is"—and he looked steadily at Ellen, who had her head bent unnecessarily low over her work—"I am in notions of marryin', if I could soot meself in a good woman, an' that she was willin'."

"Oh, now! Faith, an', Misther Sheeran, I think ye could soot yerself aisily in the parish. There's many a fine, bouncin' girl would be happy to become Missis Sheeran if they only got the chance."

"I want no bouncin' girls; I want a

steady, respectable, sensible, daicent young woman, an' I'll have no other."

"Well, I can't say but you're right enough there—if there's such to be foun' in the parish."

"There is such, then."

"Oh! Then I'm sure if ye find such a young woman, an' that she has sense, she'll think twicet, Misther Sheeran, afore she gives ye 'No.'"

"Thanky—thanky! An' *I* think, if I'm not takin' a liberty, that what *you* want is to marry a steady, sensible man, that'll take care of ye, an' of yer little farm an' belongin's."

"Ha! ha! ha!" Ellen said, tossing her head and blushing. "If ye say it in fun atself, Misther Sheeran, the same idea run in an' out o' me own head more nor wanst lately. But, Misther Sheeran"—here Ellen bent her head over the work again—"sensible, good men's scarce an' hard to be got these times."

"An', Ellen, *a chara*, do ye think there's none such in the parish?"

"Och, indeed, there might be plenty; but *I* know very few such—barrin' yerself, Misther Sheeran."

150 Through the Turf Smoke

And a fortnight later Ellen was the wife of the one sensible man whom she knew in the parish.

BILLY LAPPIN'S SEARCH FOR A FORTUNE¹

BILLY he lived ondher the same roof with Shamus² a-Ruadh (or Red Shamus), as we called him. Billy had his thrade, an' what ground the four walls stood on. Shamus, poor man, had niver a thrade at all—if we bar Adam's thrade, delvin' an' diggin'—but had a wee patch of three acres. Billy was a shoemaker, an' a first-class han', too, an' could make piles of money if he only knew how to keep it; but that was what Billy, poor man, niver could do, or niver choose to do. It was like puttin' corn into

¹ A lifrechaun, or leprechaun, is the fairy shoemaker. If the reader wants to acquire untold wealth he has only to catch a lifrechaun, then, having the presence of mind not to remove his eye from him for a fraction of an instant (thereby rendering the little fellow powerless of melting into thin air), he must at once command him to disclose where a crock of gold is hid. The little scoundrel will first endeavour to trick you into lifting your eye off him, and failing in this, will try fifty little dodges; but finding all useless, will discover to you what you want, on condition of being set free. The rest is easy.

² Properly spelled *Seumas*.

the mill-hopper to put money intil Billy's purse, for there was a hole in the bottom of it, an' it emp'ied as fast. Not to say, aither, that Billy was a dissipated man, or a man of ondifferent char-*acth*-er, be no mains; Billy was only jolly and jovial. Billy had naither wife, wain,¹ chick, nor chile in the wurr'l—he was his lee-alone, an' it was "no cow, no care" with him. "Sure, I'm both well fed an' well cled," Billy would tell ye, "an' afther that money's only a hindhrance: it would burn a hole in my pocket if I kep' it. I work hard airly an' late, an' it's little enough I'd enjoy meself at a fair or a market, thràte me frien's an' customers, an' make the money spin for it. Phew-w-w!" he would whistle, snappin' his fingers at the same time, "afther what I ait, dhrink, an' wear, an' spen' on me frien's, a big button for all the money in the kingdom of Irelan'!"

That was the description of Billy Lappin for long enough, as busy as a bumbee, an' as happy as a beggar, spendin' fast, an' makin' it faster; an' there was no mavish² from Carnaween to Californiay whistled an' sung as Billy whistled an' sung over

¹ Child.

² Thrush.

his work, airy in the mornin' an' far in the evenin', an' there wasn't (if I say it) a cozier or a heartsomer chimley-corner to sit in from end to wynd of Dinnygal.

Shamus a-Ruadh (as we called him), poor man, he lived, as I tol' ye, ondher the same roof with Billy ; but poor Shamus he had a wife an' a congregation of wains on his han's, an' had only a spade an' a stout heart to fight the wurr' with : an' a wondherful fight, considherin' the odds was again' him, he did make. Shamus was the heart an' sowl of an industhrious man, an' he had his three acres in such rotation as a flower-garden, his wee patch a parable to the counthry. He worked with Tom, Dick, an' Harry, Paddy, an' Shan, every day he could get employ ; an' every wet day, or every day he couldn't get work with his naybour, he wrought like a black on his own wee farm, besides workin' afore hours in the mornin' an' afther-time at night. But he had such a charge on his hands, an' such a small way of supportin' it, that at first people was niver tired, when they had nothin' betther to talk of, pityin' poor Shamus a-Ruadh, an' wondherin' how in the name o' goodness he'd manage to keep his head above wather till the childer'd

get up and be useful to themselves, at all, at all. But lo an' behoul' ye, he astonished the countrry when he bought in Peadhar a-Boyle's lan' for two-an'-twinty poun'—half down an' the other half to be peyd up inside two years—when Peadhar soul' out to go to Canaday. But if that astonished them, maybe it isn't dumfoundhered they wor when not four years afther he bought Dinnis a-Meehan's Lowlan' fiel's, the bate of the barony, for twoscore an' three poun's, an' peyd for it on the nail! An' two years more wasn't over his head when it was given intil him that he had the most head of stock, an' the best quality, too, in the parish—an' a warmer house than Shamus's or a more thrivin' man wasn't to be met with inside the three parishes. An' people was a'most past wondherin' now.

It was two days afther the big May fair of Ballyshanny, where Shamus had purchased five-an'-twinty poun's' worth of young stock, that there was a big debate, of an evenin', in Billy Lappin's consarnin' Shamus an' his wondherful rise in the wurr!. Billy himself was as much moi-dhered¹ about the how an' the why of it all

¹ Mixed up ; puzzled.

as the nixt, an' Billy hammered away, an' discoursed very knowin'ly intirely on luck, for it seemed to be the gineral vardict all round that it was the luck was with Shamus,—an' them as has the luck with them, it's well known whatsomiver they put their han' to prospers.

“Himph!” says Andy Shuvlin of Tully-alt, who was sittin' listenin' to the debate—“himph!” says he, “blatheration on yer luck! Yez know as much of what ye're talkin' about as a goat knows about sayin' the baids. Luck, *moryah!* I'll tell ye the luck Shamus a-Ruadh fell in with—his luck was nothin' more nor less than that he caught a lifrechaun. That's Shamus's luck, an' it's small credit till a mouse in a mill to grow fat. I have the story from them as knows it. It's six year agone, last Ware, that Shamus met with his luck, caught it be the scroof o' the neck; an' so signs on it he's a rich man iver since, but it's only by degrees he's lettin' it out. Ay, faith, the luck *is* with Shamus a-Ruadh—a crock full of it, that ye might bury yer arm in up till the elbow; an' he took it out of Barney Melly's forth¹—it has a yalla look about it an' a jingle would rise yer heart.

¹ Fort, or rath.

Ay, Shamus has got the luck, an' no mistake!"

Faith, it tuk away the breath from Billy. He stopped the peggin', with the hammer raised in his han', an' his mouth open that ye might daub a shoe intil it, while Andy was spaikin' it; an' there wasn't a sowl in the house, moreover, but was as much consternated as Billy. An' threue enough, an' it was the wondher o' the wurrl' none of them iver thought of it afore, but there was the whole mysthery about Shamus a-Ruadh's good fortune riddled now. It was the lifrechaun an' the crock o' goold out o' Barney Melly's forth was the whole thing!

Well, a hard bed an' a cowl' wan to Andy Shuvlin! He was a vagabond, anyhow, iver an' always delightin' in nothin' more nor in puttin' his naybours asthray, an' then laughin' in his sleeve at them—an' iver an' always, too, he could make a story, an' dhress it, while a houn' would be shakin' its lug. A hard bed an' a very cowl' wan, I say, to the same Andy! for from that day an' that minute Billy Lappin was a changed man. Six words more didn't pass his lips that night; but he hammered away, an' thought away, an' more times let the hammer rest

where it fell till he'd take a good long think till himself. An' the nixt' mornin', when aforetimes he'd 'a' been whistlin' an' singin' at his work, Billy was out mayandherin' about the ditches, thinkin'. He joined Shamus a-Ruadh where he was workin' in a tattie-patch, an' the divil a wan o' Shamus but yocked to think there had something odd comed over him, for no matther on what subject he set out to discourse him, poor Billy in a jiffy would, be hook or be crook, have the discourse immaidately round upon lifrechauns, an' fairy forths, an' crooks o' goold. An' when Shamus, too, went intil the house for a bit o' brakwis, there was Billy in at his heels ; an' Shamus wasn't at his brakwis till Billy was at the lifrechauns again. "Be this an' be that, Una," Shamus says to the wife, when Billy did go, "but there's a somethin' comed over poor Billy Lappin (God take care of him !), whatsom-iver it is." The short an' the long of it was Billy Lappin, who niver afore set his heart in the money he could get, was now settin' his heart an' sowl in the money he could not get. An' mopin' an' doitherin' about the ditches an' hedges Billy goes that day, an' the nixt, an' the day asther that again. "My goghendies !" Billy 'd say till himself,

"isn't it the poor thing for me be workin' the very skin off me bones—workin' airly an' workin' late—for jist as much money as houl's body an sowl together, an' to say that there's crocks full of it hid all roun' me, nearly cryin' out for people to come an' find them! My goghendies, oh, if I could only pick up wan o' them crocks, same as Shamus a-Ruadh done, isn't it Billy Lappin would be the happy an' the contented man all the days of his life afther! Och, och, och! Billy *a mhuirnín*, if ye could only get yer fist on such a crock, what wouldn't ye do? There wouldn't be a livin' sowl within ten miles o' where ye're standin' that wouldn't be the betther for yer find—all days o' the year should be fair days for them! It's then ye could thrate yer frien's as ye'd wish to thrate them. Och, Billy, Billy, Billy! it's dead ye might as well 'a' been all yer life, for all the speed ye've come. Five-an'-forty years o' hard work an' hardships, an' as poor now as ye wor the first day ye dhrew breath! Och, Billy, Billy, Billy darlin', God pity ye!"

An' there was poor Billy's song night, noon, an' mornin'. There was more work comin' intil him to do than would keep a journeyman along with himself goin', but

poor Billy he wouldn't be aither coaxed or coarsed to do a hand's turn. He had lost heart intirely, an' could be got to do noth-ing at all, at all, barrin' go sthreelin' afther Shamus a-Ruadh, from wan of his farms to the other, not sayin' much, only lookin' at Shamus with his mouth open as if he was wan o' the seven wondhers of Aiggypt—an' poor Shamus he didn't know no more nor the man o' the moon what Billy maint at all, at all ; only himself an' Una they agreed the poor fellas head was turned, an' they wor as kindly with him, an' spoke till him as coaxin'ly as they could. An' when Billy was tired throttin' after Shamus, he'd doither over the hill to Barney Melly's forth, an' walk roun' it, an' roun' it, an' then over it ; an' then he'd sit him down right atop of it, with his elbows on his knees an' his chin in his hands, an' think, an' think, an' think, for hours together.

Well an' good, this went on for as good as a week, an' Billy had made himself a spec-tac-le for the naybourhood, when, wan evenin' he was sittin' on the forth thinkin', he all of a suddint jumps up, an' starts hot foot across the countrry, an' niver stopped till he was in Tullyalt, with Andy Shuvlin himself, no less. An' Billy starts an' he

aises his mind to Andy, him sittin' on the end of a pratie sheugh where Andy was weedin'. "An' now," says he, when he had finished the paramble of his woes to Andy—"an' now, Andy," says he, "I don't begridge poor Shamus a-Ruadh his good fortune," says he, "God knows! I don't or wouldn't begridge it aither to Shamus or Una, or wan a dhrap's blood to them—an' shame be on me if I would! But Andy *avic*, isn't it a sort of hard," he says, "me that lived ondher the same roof with Shamus all me life—for me to be left to end me days as hard as I begun them, when, in wan hour's time, if only God sent the luck my way, I might be as rich as a lan'lord, an' never move a han' for the remainder of me natural life except to make much of them I wish well to—an', Andy, you know them same would make a purty good-sized fair if they wor gathered together."

"Himph!" says Andy, says he, who had stopped his weedin' an' taken a sate on the broo o' the ridge beside him—"himph! Thruen enough words for ye, Billy Lappin, an' it's meself, throth, feels for ye—an' ye know it. That it should put purty hard on ye is only natural; an'

purty hard, I'm sartint sure, it would put on meself ondher the same sarcumstances. Yis, hard, in throth. But Billy, me lad," says Andy, says he, "if you want to meet with Shamus a-Ruadh's luck—an' small blame to ye if ye do, an' pity ye wouldn't—why the divil don't ye catch a lisfrechaun for yerself?"

An' this put Billy to a dead stan' for two minutes.

"Ay, but Andy *a thaisge*," says he, "sure that's where the tide laives me. How am I to get hould o' wan?"

"Phoo!" says Andy, "if that's all's botherin' ye, ye can aisy enough get over that," says he.

"What! Aisy?" says Billy, the eyes startin' in his head.

"As aisy as kiss yer han'," says Andy. "Now, Billy Lappin, you just pay attention to the words I'm goin' to tell ye. You heerd me reharse in your house not very many nights ago how Shamus a-Ruadh come by his good luck?"

"Yis, yis!" says Billy.

"Then, Billy, I repate what I sayd afore, that it's as aisy as winkin' for you to catch a lisfrechaun."

"Andy, ye sowl ye, I'll make a rich man o'

ye!" says Billy, jumpin' till his feet. "How am I to catch him? Hurroo!"

"Sit down, sit down here, Billy, an' be quate, an' let me go on with me story. I'll not ax ye to make a rich man o' me. The divil all else I'll ax ye do than, afther ye've caught the lifrechaun, an' then got the goold, to jus' len' me the price of a small wee donkey till afther I've thrashed in the harwust, an' for that I'll be very mightily obliged to you," says Andy.

"The price of a—small—wee—donkey! Andy *a chuisle*, I'll stock yer farm with ele-*phants*!"

"Och, throth, an' it's too kind ye are, an' ever an' always wor, Billy *a ghradh*; but I thank you, an' I don't want no ele-*phants*, only just a nice handy wee bit of a donkey that'll fetch home the winther's thurf for me, an' do wee odd jobs for meself an' a naybour or two I wish well to—an' I'll pay ye as I sayd, when I thrash."

"Pay be hanged, Andy Shuvlin! Is it want to insult me ye do? I'll buy ye all the asses from Galway to Ginnyland, an' make them a present to ye."

"Oh, no, no!" says Andy, says he. "I wouldn't think of it—I couldn't think of it; ye'll have to let me pay ye back the

last black ha'penny of it—afther I have thrashed. But to come to what we're at, Billy Lappin. I'll give you all the knowledge on the subject I got meself, an' give it to ye as I got it ; an' if you folly it to the letter, small chance but ye're a made man. You can catch a lifrechaun in this way : ye must find a he-goat that belongs to a man who's naither bachelor nor marrid, that's naither ould nor young, an' that has naither horns nor no horns, an' that naither feeds on bushes nor grasses ; ye're to get sthrag-legs on that goat when it's naither night nor day ; ye're to mount him naither in yer own parish nor in any other parish —an' all that done, ye're to give the goat his head, an' houl' on lake grim daith ; let him run till he stops, then look out atween his lugs, an' yer lifrechaun's there forenenst ye, hammerin' away at his thrade—an', Misther Lappin, you're too knowledgable a man for me have the imperence to tell ye what ye're to do afther."

Billy, who hadn't known for joy whether he was on his head or his heels, got down in the mouth as Andy went on.

"Arrah, but, Andy," says he, "sure, man a-dear, ye might as well talk Spanish to pavin'-stones. It's onpossible for a mortal

man to go through with them dirac-
tions."

"On the conthrairy," says Andy, "let
me tell ye that Providence is playin' intil
yer han's in the most exthr'ornery way
ever I knew."

"Make me sensible, Andy," says Billy.

"You know Matthew Mulhern of Sthra-
beg?" says Andy.

"I do," says Billy.

"Matthew Mulhern of Sthrabeg," says
Andy, says he, "has a goat with only the wan
horn—beca'se it smashed the other clane
off a twelvemonth ago buttin' the tillygraph
pole was put up bye Matthew's, thinkin' it
was some new sort of a polisman. Wan
horn isn't *horns*; no more is it *no horns*."

"By Jaimminty, yis," says Billy, clappin'
his hands.

"Matthew's naither a marrid man nor a
bachelor, beca'se, as ye know, he's a widda;
he's naither ould nor young, for he's middle-
aged; he naither feeds on bushes nor
grasses, be raison Matthew keeps him on
the Black Moor, where there grows divil a
blade else but heather."

"Right ye are, Andy, me hearty," says
Billy.

"If you mount the goat in the twilight

it'll be naither night nor day. An' ye know as well as I can tell ye that at the wan corner o' Matthew's Black Moor the three parishes join, an' that's the spot for you, beca'se it's naither in your own parish nor in any other. An' there's for ye now, Misther Lappin!"

Whew! me brave Billy give three leaps into the air, like a kid on May-day, an' yelled for the very joy, an' then threw his arms round Andy Shuvlin, the rascal, an' hugged an' hugged him till he near a'most squeezed the sowl out of him—an' me-self's thinkin' that same wouldn't be much sin.

That self-same evenin' seen me brave Billy powlin' away for Sthrabeg, with his head higher an' carryin' himself airier than he done for a week past. When he reached there he went jookin' an' creepin' roun' be the ditches, for he didn't want no wan—much less Matthew—to see him; an' when the sun popped down behin' Munther-mullagh, Billy was sthretched among the heather on the Black Moor, an' the goat tethered not fifty yards from him, munchin' an' crunchin' away at the heather, like as if it was the sweetest lettises he ever tasted.

Now, more betoken, the same was the fair evenin' of Ballinthra, an' there was few people to be met with, for they wor all gone to the fair; an' this suited Billy down to the groun'. But, all the same, he didn't wait long, only let it get a wee thrifle duskish, for he was itchin' to get his fist on the lifrechaun; an' when he thought it was close enough in the middle atween night an' day, an' he could houl' out no longer, Billy starts up an' lifts the tether to lead the goat to the mearin' of the parishes. But, mo bhron! afore Billy knew where he was he foun' himself goin' head over heels, an' thought there was some sort of a wee earthquake strtruck him behind—for there wasn't a bigger an' sstronger nor a boulder he-goat in all the countrry than Matthew Mulhern's Brian Boru, as the boys had christened this wan, bec'ase of his fondness for fightin', an' his luck in always gettin' the upper han'. Billy started, now that he did get up, off in the diraction of the spot he wanted to reach, with the goat, as he well expected, keepin' close tack till him, an' givin' him an odd lift back an' forrid if he slacked in his gallop at all; an' as he did raich the spot atween the three parishes, an' thried to dhraw up, Brian Boru hoisted

him from behind like a keg of gun-*powdher*, an' over he went with Brian head an' heels over on top of him. In the scrimmage, somehow or other, Billy managed to come out atop, and strag-legs he was on Brian Boru's back in the shakin' of an ass's lug.

Now Billy was but a small moiety of a man, an' Brian Boru could carry two like him, an' jump over his own head with them, if he had only a mind. But the goat hadn't the mind—at first, at any rate; for he riz on his hind legs an' then riz on his fore, an' he bucked an' riggled an' twisted, in hopes of throwin' Billy; but, me sowl, Billy knew it was too much throuble an' vexation he had gettin' where he got to pursuade himself to be taken down off it so soon.

Billy held on to the goat like a miser to his bag, an' Brian Boru might as soon think to rattle down a creelful of stars with his horn as to shake Billy from his sate.

So when he thried, an' thried, an' thried over again, till he seen thryin' was no use, off he starts at a run, as straight ahead as an arra would fly; an' Billy on his back took a tighter grip, an', "Now," says he—

"now, glory be to goodness ! I'm in for it ! If ye can only houl' yer hoult, Billy Lappin, it's a made man ye are this night." An' if he didn't just altogether cut as good a figure, there was niver yet a jockey rode a race-horse that held to his sate as fast as Billy held his.

It was purty cogglesome ridin', was the moor, an' every joult Billy got ye might think it was enough to loosen the teeth in his head ; but he bore it lake the warrior he was. For Matthew's broken fiel' the goat first made ; there was a sheugh of a sizable width, an' poor Billy thought he'd meet doom in it ; but, tiddylfallal ! over it with a skip went Brian Boru. Billy's heart went out of his mouth, an' he didn't catch it again till he was half-ways over the fiel'.

There was a thorn-hedge atween that fiel' an' the nixt, an' sweet sarra to the goat if anywhere else would do it to cross but through the hedge. "Ram ye for an ass of a goat !" Billy yells. "Have ye no aisier place to cross ?" But the words wasn't out of his mouth till through went the goat, an' through, somehow or another, went Billy ; but he thought there wasn't two pieces of him stickin' together, an'

couldn't be sure there was till he groped himself with his han'. He was runnin' the blood like the hill of Aughrim, but Billy's spirit wasn't cowed for all that. . "The morra mornin'," says he, "an', plaise God, I'll be able to buy stickin'-plaster to sheet Ben-Bulbin." He had an undauntless sowl, had poor Billy. "But what the devil's this he's goin' to do with me now ?" says he ; an' the next minute he thought the left leg was gone off of him for good an' all against Archie Barron's gate-post. "Phew ! who cares for a miserly leg !" says Billy. "A beautiful wan of goold an' mother-of-pearl 'll be more befittin' a man o' my wealth an' station, anyhow, afther this night."

Down through Archie's garden went the goat like a race-horse ; but fareer ! what was the nixt tantrum come intil his head but to carry Billy right slap through the middle of Archie's bee-skeps ! "Melia-murther !" says Billy, an' over went two of the skeps ! An' out with a buzz, an' a whuzz, an' the devil's own roolye-boolye, rises the two hives o' bees, an' afther Billy an' Brian Boru like a rajiment of polis afther a mad dog ! "Sents purtect me this night !" says Billy. "I'm as good as a dead man ! Run, ye devil ye !" says he,

diggin' his knees into Brian. "Run, ye divil ye, as ye niver run afore!"

But if Brian Boru had been as smart again, the bees wor still smarter nor him ; an' Billy, I tell you, had a purty busy time of it, thryin' to houl' his grip on the goat with wan hand an' fight the bumbees with the other ; but when there got a bee or two into Billy's lug, an' half a han'ful of them into Brian's, there was throuble in the air, believe you me. Billy he roared like a bull a-stickin', an' he used more langwidge than ever he foun' in his prayer-book. But lo ! at the foot of Archie's garden there was a dhry sheugh both wide an' deep, an' well overgrown with both briars an' nettles. The goat he come gallopin' right to the brink of it like a race-horse that didn't mane to be last, an' right there he stuck his four legs an' come till a dead halt, while poor Billy, Lord help him ! was shot out right over Brian's wan horn, an' crash through briars an' nettles he went, crown first, feelin' for the bottom ; an' there he stuck with the soles of his feet just appearin' above the ondherwood like some new kind of a wildflower ! Brian Boru, as soon as he got rid of his load, turns, an' helter-skelter off in a new diraction he

makes, with the two hives o' bees afther, givin' him all the encouragement they could.

Billy, he might have stuck there till he'd have grown to the bottom, only Andy Shuvlin, the veg¹ that he was, wasn't far away, watchin' the whole coarse of Billy's gymnastricks ; an' when he seen Billy stuck safely in the sheugh, he ran into Archie Barron's an' toul' Archie he b'lieved Billy Lappin had a wee dhrap o' dhrink aboord, an' was intherfarin' with his bees without ; an' he thought, if he wasn't mistaken, the bees had give him a chase into the sheugh at the bottom of the garden, an' it might be as well for Archie to see to him laist harm would come till him on his groun' ; an' then Andy left.

Archie, as mad as a score an' a half of hatters, went leapin' down the garden. He got Billy Lappin be the heels an' dhragged him out, with the full intention of givin' him such another dhrubbin' as he hadn't got in his born days afore. But, behold ye, when Archie got him out, poor Billy hadn't a gasp in him, an' without a word or a sign he sthretched himself out as stiff as a corp. Archie raised the whillalew at wanst till a

¹ Vagabond.

wheen o' the naybours come runnin' to his help, an' they carried Billy home an' poured brandy intil him an' put him till his bed, an' he didn't open an eye till the nixt mornin'; an' for a day an' a night afther it was few was the words Billy spoke; but he was thinkin' at the rate of a mill.

The mornin' of the second day he hilloed on Shamus a-Ruadh, an' Shamus comed in. "Shamus," says Billy, "sit ye down there on the fut o' the bed till I start ye a queskin, an' look me in the eye an' answer me sthr'ight."

Shamus, not knowin' what in the wurrl' Billy would be dhrivin' at now, sat him down on the bottom of the bed, an' Billy he put it sthr'ight till him that he had caught a lifrechaun, an' in that way come intil all his wealth; an' axed Shamus for God's sake to tell him how *he* was to set about catchin' wan for himself. When Shamus heerd this he set up a laugh that made the rafthers dinnle, an' he now seen intil all Billy's exthr'ornery ways an' talk for the past while.

"Well, Billy, me son," says Shamus, says he, when he got his tongue with him, "I did catch a lifrechaun, sure enough, an' the how I caught it is no great saicret; yerself

or e'er another man in the parish can collar wan for himself in the self-same way, an' with no more throuble than me—though, in throth, even if it was a saicret, it's yerself, Billy, would be welcome till it, an' a *cead mile failte*. I caught me lifrechaun, Billy *avourneen*, be mindin' me farm an' stickin' to me spade, workin' airly an' workin' late, goin' to few fairs an' markets, barrin' them I couldn't stay from, an' stoppin' late in none of them ; without, I thrust, bein' either niggardly or near-goin', or passin' me naybour when I did meet him from home without axin' him had he a mouth on him, still knowin' the valuey of a penny, an' knowin' that while wan an' wan made two with a careful man, an' two an' two four, wan an' wan with a spendthrift made nothin', an' two an' two a broken head. Doin' an' knowin' all this, an' havin'—thanks be to Him!—God's blessin' about me, an' His grace, I do thrust, I caught me lifrechaun, an' the lifrechaun fetched me not money so much as aise an' content an' happiness ; bekase, Billy, happiness an' content an' a feelin' of thankfulness to God is, afther all, the great thing, an' money is useful an' enjoyable only in so far as it helps you to those. So much so, Billy, that if ye find happiness an' content with tenpence a day, ye have caught a lifrechaun ; while if ye got a poun' a minute, an' didn't get content with it, it was only a divil ye caught in a lifrechaun's shape.

"An' now, Billy, me child, I'm inclined to think that you had your lifrechaun in your hands, an' let him go whilst ye went huntin' a devil."

Billy Lappin he rowled over in the bed without spaikin' a word to this, good, bad, or ondifferent ; an' he lay thinkin' for a day an' a night more.

On the nixt mornin' Shamus a-Ruadh was wakened at the brak o' day be hearin' through the wall Billy peggin' away, an' hammerin', an' he whistlin' an' singin' like a nightingale.

"Thanks be to God !" says Shamus, " me poor Billy has caught his lifrechaun again."

An', thanks be to God, he had ! An' it niver parted him no more.

Matthew Mulhern an' Archie Barron, it's thtrue, wanted revenge on Billy bekase of Brian Boru an' the bumbees ; but then Billy owed revenge on Andy Shuvlin, the scapegrace ; so Billy sent word to Matthew an' Archie that it would save time an' throuble, an' wipe out both accounts at the wan reckinin', if, some spare day they'd have nothin' else to do, they'd take a dandher over to Tullyalt an' dhrub Andy.

But there wasn't four mirrier men in all Ballyshannon the nixt fair day, when the same four gripped hands over half a pint of whisky, an' dhrunk the health of Brian Boru.

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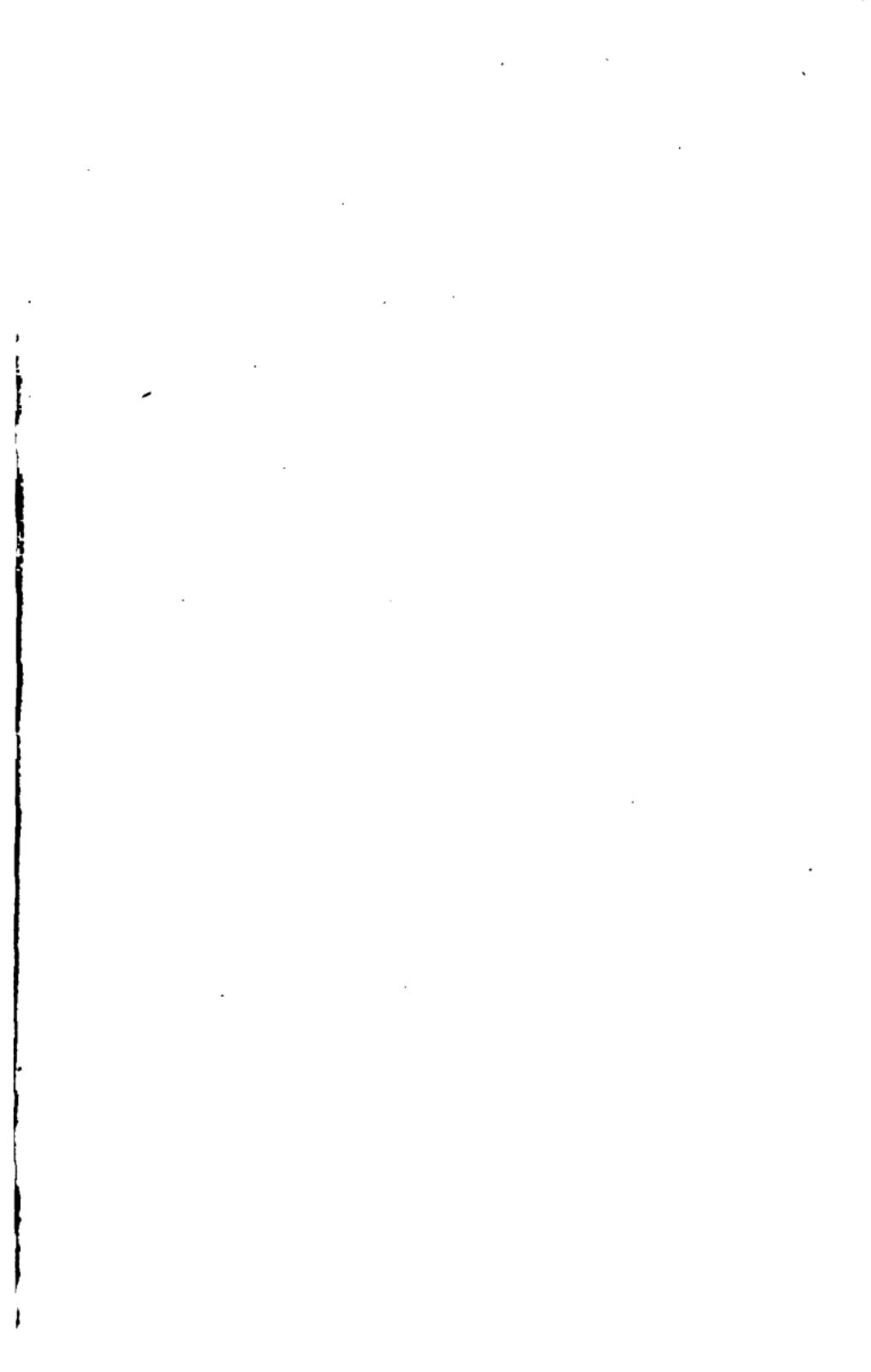
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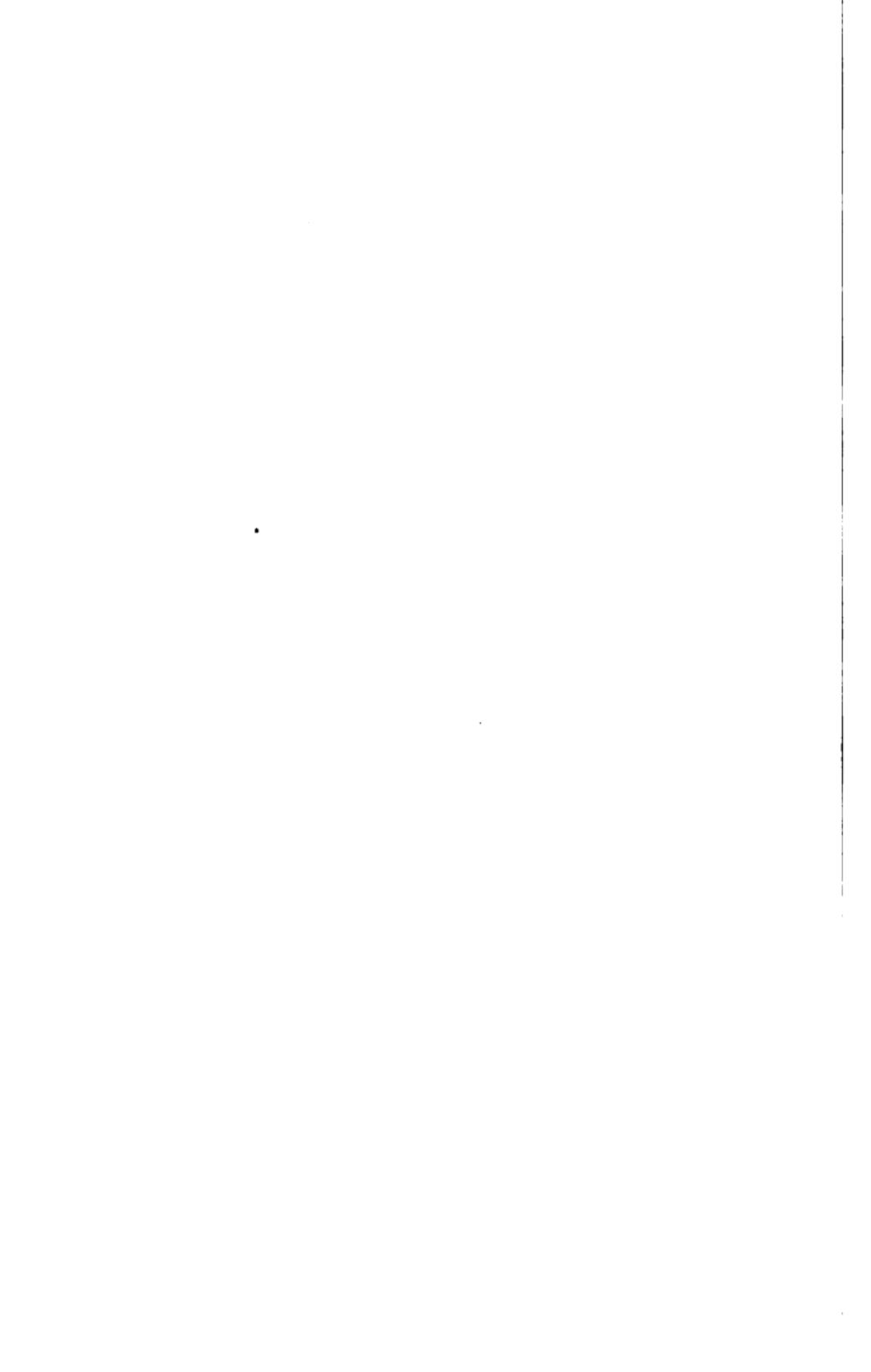
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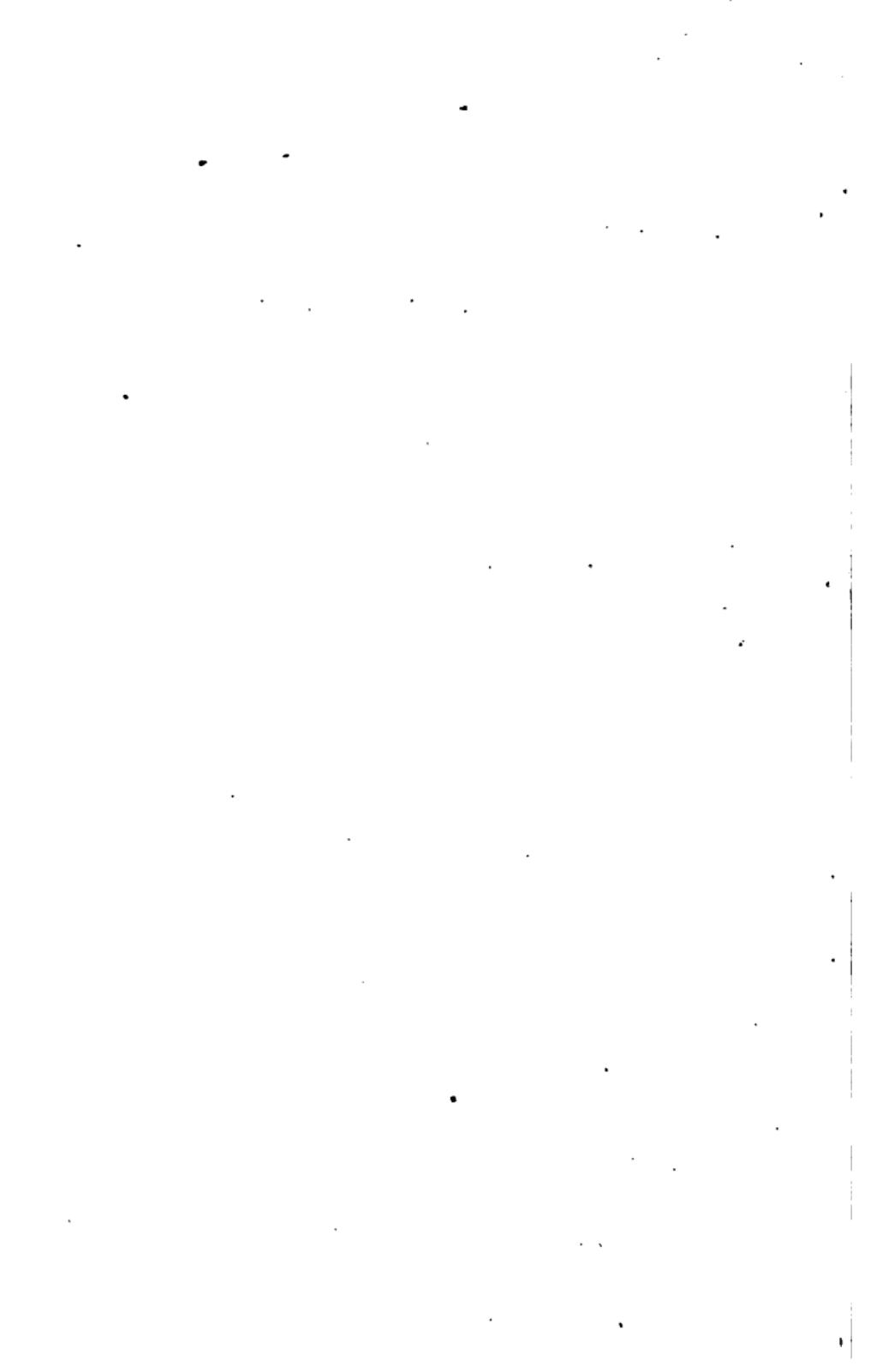
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